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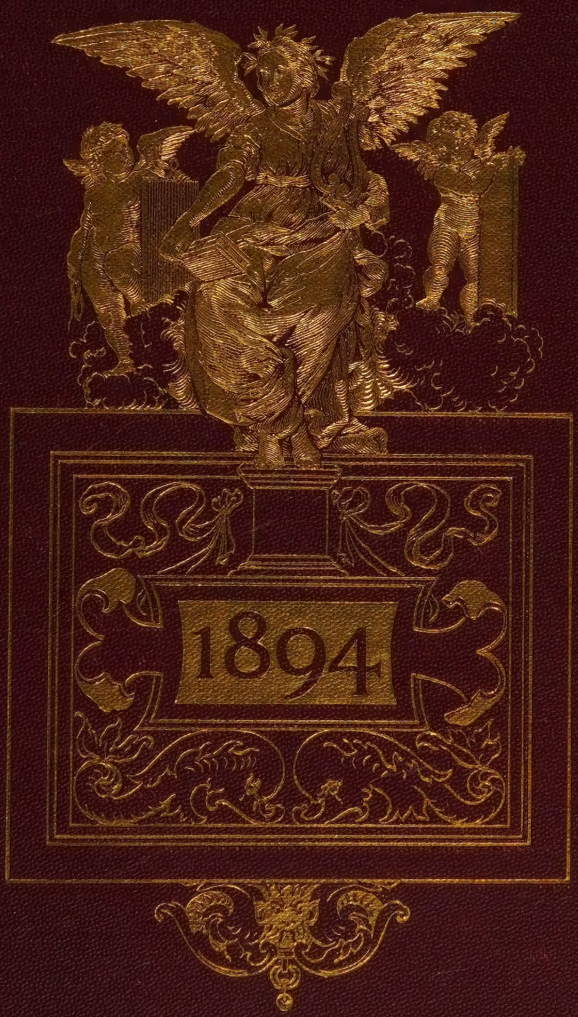

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MONOGRAPHS ON ARTISTIC SUBJECTS

EDITED BY P. G. HAMERTON

REMBRANDT'S ETCHINGS

By P. G. HAMERTON

MALTA

By W. K. R. BEDFORD, M.A.

WEDWGOOD

By A. H. CHURCH, F.R.S.

LONDON

SEELEY AND CO., LIMITED, ESSEX STREET, STRAND

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1894

THE ETCHINGS OF REMBRANDT

By

P. G. HAMERTON

Author of "Etching & Etchers"

Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers

LONDON

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THE DATE OF REMBRANDT'S BIRTH

The date 1607 is according to Vosmaer. Other writers have given 1606, and this has been accepted by Mr. Haden and M. Michel. I had not space to enter into the controversy, and merely trusted the Dutch biographer.

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THE ETCHINGS OF REMBRANDT

PART I

THE PLATES CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

I

THIS little treatise is intended to be an introduction to the study of the etched work of Rembrandt. The notice of him in *Etching and Etchers* was of necessity no more than a short account of what he had done, with a special mention of a few representative plates; the catalogues of Bartsch, Claussin, Wilson, Charles Blanc, Middleton, and Dutuit, are too voluminous and important to be convenient as handbooks, besides being too mechanical in arrangement for consecutive reading. A memorable exhibition of Rembrandt's etchings was held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in the year 1877, and the catalogue of it is well known, for two special reasons, to all serious students of Rembrandt, both in England and on the Continent. The first of these reasons is the adoption, at that time unprecedented, of the chronological order in preference to the old classification by subject, and the second is the Introduction by Mr. Seymour Haden, in which he expressed his disbelief in the authenticity of certain famous plates that had been admitted into all previous catalogues. Mr. Haden's argument is of such importance that no subsequent writer can afford to pass it in silence, but it is fully intelligible, in all its bearings, only by advanced students. Besides this, the catalogue in which it appeared was privately printed for the Club, and is not generally accessible. The same objection, so far as ordinary English readers are concerned, applies even to some of the

published contributions to Rembrandt literature, which are costly, and printed in foreign languages. For example, the French catalogue by Dutuit, with heliographic reproductions by Charreyre, is sold at six hundred francs. It has therefore seemed to us that there was room for a handbook to the etchings of Rembrandt, published at a low price, and containing a synoptic account arranged in a readable form, and in such a manner that any one who perused it might find himself, with little effort, so far acquainted with the subject that no part of Rembrandt's great performance as an etcher would seem absolutely strange to him.

The systematic study of the works of a great etcher is seldom undertaken by lovers of art who are not led to it by the requirements of a critic or a collector, and yet this systematic study, though it may seem tedious to the amateur, and pedantic to the artist, and though it may be regarded with the most complete indifference by the public generally, has its own rewards to offer in the additional clearness which it imparts to the whole subject, and in the enhanced interest that every separate etching gains from being known in connection with the rest. This kind of study would be impossible for us without the help of the minutely detailed information that the zealous industry of catalogue-makers has accumulated for our use. We are, indeed, infinitely their debtors, for without their labours of love, extending, in some cases, over many years, and rewarded only by the appreciation of the few who know all that such toil involves, the student could never gain a comprehensive view of the total production of a great artist. Even if he had access to a complete collection, it would be impossible for him to know that it was complete.

I have just alluded to two methods in the arrangement of a catalogue, the chronological order and classification by subject. Even in a brief treatise like the present some definite system is necessary, and I have decided to adopt three systems, each for one part of my essay, which will keep them as distinct from each other as possible, both for the reader's convenience and my own. The first is chronological so as to connect the etchings, or many of them, with the inspiring and affecting story of Rembrandt's courageous and troubled existence. One of the great artist's biographers, M. Emile Michel, says that Rembrandt has himself almost invariably enlightened us as to the date of his works, but this,

with regard at least to the etchings, is certainly saying too much and therefore it is impossible for me to follow the chronological method exclusively. M. Dutuit, on the other hand, observes that nearly two-thirds of Rembrandt's etchings are without date. This statement is, however, a very great exaggeration of their still too frequent datelessness. Mr. Middleton, in his catalogue, admits three hundred and twenty-nine plates as genuine. Out of these, one hundred and eighty-one are dated, so that the dated plates are in the majority and sufficiently abundant to afford in themselves all that is needed for reference in the first, or biographical, portion of this essay, especially considering that the author, having a limited space at his command, is not under any obligation to refer to everything that Rembrandt executed. Those who try to make complete chronological catalogues are sorely tempted to assign dates that must in many instances be purely, if not wildly, conjectural. Each instance would require to be supported by a separate argument which is seldom given, so that the reader sees that the date is assumed but does not often know why it is assumed. The compiler has, no doubt, gone through a process of reasoning that is satisfactory to himself and might be so to his readers if their faith were not disturbed by other equally authorised compilers. Our teachers do, indeed, arrive at the most divergent and contradictory conclusions. The differences between Vosmaer and Middleton are extremely frequent, and in several instances so wide that it would seem as if there were nothing in the changing manner of Rembrandt's workmanship, or in his tastes and interests so far as the choice of subject is concerned, to justify one in fixing a date within a year or two, or even a decade. For example there is the well-known plate of *The Triumph of Mordecai* to which Vosmaer assigns 1640 or from that to 1645, whereas Middleton fixes 1651. *The Adoration of the Shepherds* was etched, according to Vosmaer, between 1632 and 1640, according to Middleton in 1652. *The Star of the Kings* is dated by Vosmaer 1641, but Middleton puts it twelve years later. When we are assured by the Dutch authority that the date of *The Blind Man seen from behind* is 1651 the English connoisseur throws us back no less than twenty-one years, a little more than one-third of Rembrandt's whole existence. There is, however, one page in Vosmaer's great work which

deserves our unqualified approval. It is that in which he gives a list of twenty-one plates for which he declines to fix any date whatever. Writers for whom the fixing of dates is an absolutely over-mastering passion may always safely assume that an etching by Rembrandt was produced between 1607, when the artist came into the world, and 1669, when he went out of it. No other plan is absolutely safe. It might seem possible, at first sight, to assume that Rembrandt took up the etching-needle in 1628, which is the first date we have, and laid it down in 1661, as that is the last, but we have not the slightest proof that he did not begin to etch when he was sixteen instead of twenty-one, or that he did not continue the practice of the art after having, from negligence or discouragement, entirely ceased to put dates upon his productions. The matter may seem to be of slight importance in comparison with the authenticity or the technical excellence of the plates themselves, but it is really more important than, at first sight, it may appear. If we knew exactly the order in which all the plates were executed we might observe with the keenest interest the signs of mental and technical progress. This is possible, in some degree, even with the dated works that are accessible to us, although, as we have seen, they are not very much more than half of the magnificent *Œuvre*.

My rule to refer in the biographical part to dated plates only is a restriction on the side of safety, but there is another equally important, and that is that a critic ought not to refer, except by way of caution, to any plate of whose authenticity he is not perfectly satisfied. The reader not yet familiar with the controversy concerning Rembrandt's etchings may be briefly told in this place that a plate may be signed with his name, and dated, without being necessarily his handiwork. The etchings accumulated in collections under the name of Rembrandt may be classed in these five categories.

1. Those plates of which the conception and execution are equally and entirely those of Rembrandt himself. This category includes both successful plates and failures which are rather numerous in proportion, but the failure is in most instances purely technical and does not greatly interfere with the mental qualities of the performance.

2. Plates of which the idea and design belong to Rembrandt but of which the execution has been partially entrusted to assistants.

3. Plates designed by Rembrandt but executed entirely by others.

4. Plates of which the manual execution is more or less completely due to Rembrandt, but in composing which he made use of borrowed ideas.

5. Plates with which Rembrandt had nothing whatever to do, either mentally or manually.

Now of these five categories, I intend to confine myself, in the two earlier parts of the present essay, entirely to the first. In my third part, I shall enter upon the stony and thorny ground of controversy and deal with the doubtful or contested plates, not that I have any particular eagerness for controversial warfare, but because, in this case it is impossible to keep out of it. Besides, no reasonable person could fall into the illogical fallacy of interpreting an attack upon the authenticity of more or less spurious Rembrandts as an attack upon Rembrandt himself. The truth is that no kinder service can be rendered to a great artist by the most faithful of his admirers than the detection of those works that the cupidity of some, and the uncritical confidence of others, have falsely attributed to him. Every work justly discarded relieves his reputation of a burden, and when we reflect how ready posterity always is to attribute works to celebrities whose names are familiar to it, and how strongly persons who have them in their possession, or desire to sell them, are biassed in favour of such attribution, it seems inevitable that these burdens should be laid upon the memory of the dead.

The absence of concord amongst authorities is shown in the following little table:—

Bartsch (1797)	admits	375 plates.
Claussin (1824)	„	365 „
Wilson (1836)	„	369 „
Charles Blanc (1859–61)	„	353 „
Vosmaer (1868–77)	„	353 „
Middleton (1878)	„	329 „
Dutuit (1883)	„	363 „

Charles Blanc gives a list of twenty-nine rejected plates and makes an addition of seven to the catalogue. Vosmaer accepts the number given by Blanc as well as his system of order. Mr. Middleton gives

a list of eighteen rejected studies and sketches with thirty rejected landscapes, and M. Dutuit adds to his catalogue a list of six etchings "attributed to" Rembrandt, and two "falsely attributed." It is unnecessary to go further into these questions at present. The reader sees the necessity for great caution, but I may add, to reassure him, that the great majority of the plates still attributed to Rembrandt bear so visibly the impress of his hand and genius that they are accepted without hesitation by every one who is familiar with his styles (for he had several styles) and with the very different moods of his versatile and generally quite original mind. He sometimes borrowed from others, but not often, and though it is now evident that he accepted assistance in the execution of certain plates that bear his name, we must still remember that he was one of the most personally industrious of great artists and one of those who have been most rarely dependent upon auxiliaries.

It remains only to be added that references to plates will be accompanied, at least once, by the numbers given respectively in the catalogues of Bartsch and Middleton. That of Bartsch, though nearly a hundred years old, is still a living work, in continual requisition, whilst Mr. Middleton's catalogue has the advantages of being written in English eighty years later, and of being easily accessible to Englishmen. I would willingly have given references, in addition, to that of Charles Blanc, as it is very clear and readable, and was charmingly illustrated by Flameng, but it seemed that a string of three references to every plate was likely to be confusing, especially as the names of the Frenchman and the German begin with the same letter.

II

The reputation of Rembrandt has undergone the most extreme vicissitudes. In his own life-time he rose from obscurity to a local and afterwards national celebrity, but sank down again, several years before his death, into the trying position of a neglected and unfashionable artist. "Often," says Vosmaer, "have I felt indignant at the small degree of enthusiasm manifested by his contemporaries." Vondel either really cared nothing for Rembrandt or affected complete indifference.

Another contemporary poet said that as Rembrandt found he could not equal Titian, Vandyke or Michael Angelo, he preferred to wander from the right path and become the first heretic in art rather than strengthen himself by following the most experienced. Houbraken speaks of the art of Rembrandt in the past tense, saying that it *had* (at one time) the success of novelty, it *was* a fashion, and artists had been obliged to imitate him in order to sell, even when their own manner of painting was far superior. Lairesse condemned Rembrandt and Lievens together, but, with a distant approach to generosity, went so far as to admit that Rembrandt's way of painting was "not absolutely bad." Some time after the artist's death came a reaction in his favour showing itself decidedly in the beginning of the eighteenth century by an extended appreciation in foreign countries. Still, throughout the eighteenth century, criticism was too subservient to classical authority to recognise Rembrandt with any complete cordiality, and if he was praised for some qualities he was condemned, with at least equal frankness, for the defects that accompanied them. Even so late in the century as the time of Barry, who began his Academy lectures in 1784, it was possible for him to speak of Rembrandt's "laborious, *ignorant* diligence," in rendering the "multiplied wrinkles and trifling peculiarities of the skin." He admitted the ability of Rembrandt in colouring and chiaroscuro but hated his most masterly style, condemning the "obtrusive, licentious, slovenly conduct of his pencil" as "not less disgusting than it is useless." Opie spoke of him as "foremost of those who in the opinion of some critics cut the knot instead of untying it, and burglariously entered the Temple of Fame by the window." Reynolds compared Poussin with Rembrandt as to their composition and management of light and shadow, adding that they "ran into contrary extremes and that it is difficult to determine which is the most reprehensible, both being equally distant from the demands of nature and the purposes of art." He admits that the pictures of Rembrandt may "not come amiss when mixed with the performances of artists of a more regular manner." Reynolds was just however (without being in the least enthusiastic) about both drawing and colour in *The Anatomical Lesson*. Fuseli appreciated Rembrandt better, classing him as a genius of the first rank "in whatever relates not to form." Again, Fuseli has an intelligent

onslaught upon the topographic delineation of landscape and says that the landscape of Rembrandt "spurns all relation with this kind of map-work." He describes Rembrandt's figures as "uniform abstracts of lumpy or meagre deformity," but admits that, "form only excepted, he possessed every power that constitutes genius in art."

All these academical opinions, including the favourable one of Constable on Rembrandt's chiaroscuro picture of the Mill, refer to the master's work in painting, not to his etchings. One of the first English artists who took any special interest in the etchings was the elder Leslie, and he once wrote a short sentence of five lines about the services of photography in reproducing "these inestimable works." Mr. Ruskin once gave a foot-note, also of five lines, to Rembrandt's etchings, that appreciated the synthetic quality of the landscapes, and in the text of "Modern Painters," there are references to two plates, *The Presentation in the Temple* (B. 50. M. 243) and *The Shell* (B. 159. M. 290). I do not remember any other reference to the etchings in Mr. Ruskin's works except some depreciatory remarks upon their technique in a letter on the etchings of Mr. Ernest George.

In most of these instances of criticism, what strikes us is the remarkable coolness of the critics, their absence of anything approaching to enthusiasm. Those who appreciate in some degree the qualities of the master are not carried away by them, they have not the tone of critics speaking about an artist who has delighted them and whose defects they may be aware of but are willing to overlook ; they have the tone of men who, when they praise, do it from a wish to avoid injustice. Fuseli is hearty in praise and blame, Leslie and Constable praise heartily as far as they go, but are extremely laconical. The brevity of Mr. Ruskin is still more striking in a diffusely eloquent writer—six lines for the religious subjects, five for the landscapes, two for a study of still life!

The truth appears to be that the present splendour of Rembrandt's fame is more recent than we can easily realise. It has been due to several causes, distinct in themselves, but all operating together. The first is the complete extinction of classicism as an exclusive authority though it has happily survived, and with improved culture, as a taste. The second lies in the greater facilities for travelling which have enabled critics to see more of Rembrandt's whole performance and know him better, and the

third is in the invention of certain processes of engraving in which photography does the drawing, though not the biting, and so far ensures a considerable degree of fidelity, as well as cheapness in the most recent reproductions. But these causes, potent as they are, would probably have had a less effect on Rembrandt's fame if they had not been accompanied, in all civilised countries, by a revival of the art of etching. The opinion amongst etchers which enthrones Rembrandt as the king of their craft is the most recent instance of perfect unanimity amongst people of all nationalities. As we all say that Phidias was the greatest sculptor, Homer the greatest epic poet, and Shakespeare the greatest dramatist, so are we all agreed upon the world-wide supremacy of Rembrandt. And the higher our appreciation of etching as essentially an artist's art the more exalted becomes the position of its greatest practitioner. I am told that, of late years, there has been some decline in the appreciation of etching. Perhaps it is no longer fashionable to pretend to be enchanted by its masterpieces, but these changes of surface-fashion have little to do with culture. The plain truth is that the etched work of Rembrandt is now intelligible to thousands, whereas in the beginning of the present century it was almost like an unknown tongue, or characters understood by few.

Another recent piece of good fortune for Rembrandt is that he has fallen into the hands of a competent biographer, Vosmaer, a writer entirely free from that credulity of mediocrity which makes it ever ready to accept the common calumnies against genius. The idlest and most ridiculous stories about Rembrandt had become traditional. Vosmaer showed that they had not, and that they could not have, any other foundation than the inventive spite of a great man's usual detractors. He showed us Rembrandt as he lived, a man of immense industry and the simplest tastes (with the one exception of a passion for works of art), a man whose force of character and courage in adversity immediately suggest to English readers the name of one great in another art who died like Rembrandt in harness and at Rembrandt's years, the artist who died at Abbotsford.

In his own lines of work there is no one in all history to be compared with Rembrandt; in artistic influence he has one equal, entirely unlike himself, and that is Raphael. It was not by accident that medallions of these two were put together on the cover of the *Portfolio*. They are

the two most influential graphic artists of all time. Comte defined art as consisting in the three processes of observation, imitation, and idealisation. The three are common to both artists but in Rembrandt observation predominates, in Raphael idealisation. As for imitation they are alike in possessing the power of it and in using it more or less, but always subordinately to the artistic purpose. Raphael is called quite accurately in a certain sense, "the divine"; "the human" is an epithet that might, with equal justice, be applied to Rembrandt.

III

The date of the first etchings that have any date at all is the year 1628, when the artist was twenty-one years old. There are two signed etchings for that year. One of them, *An Old Woman's Head, full face, seen only to the Chin* (B. 352. M. 6.), is very simply etched, though drawn with easy skill, especially visible in the reserves of half-light in the shaded parts. It is already the work of an artist, but has no special distinction. The other little plate, *Bust of an Old Woman, lightly etched* (B. 354. M. 5), is much more than that; it is the work, already, of a great and most accomplished master. It was never afterwards surpassed, either in the penetrating observation of nature, or in delicate sufficiency of execution, by any subsequent work of Rembrandt himself, and it is almost impossible to believe that even so strong a natural genius as his could produce work of such rare excellence without years of previous practice, not only in drawing, but in actual work with the etching needle. He probably began to etch in his minority, making attempts that did not seem to him worth dating, then he did these things, and put not only his signature, but the year. However this may be, the fact is certain that at the age of twenty-one he had already mastered one of his several styles. I do not wish to exaggerate the matter, I do not believe that at twenty-one he could have got through such a task as the portrait of the Burgomaster Six, but he had already one of the strings to his bow.

At the date of these plates Rembrandt was living at his father's house in Leyden. He had been destined to a learned profession, but had not taken well to classical studies, and instead of proceeding with them had

followed art in Van Swanenburch's studio for three years, which probably ended about 1620. After that he had been apprenticed to Pieter Lastman and stayed with him, according to Orlers, six months. It is believed that he returned to his father's house about 1623, and stayed there till 1630. At the date of the etchings that occupy us he had already painted a picture which is known and now at Stuttgart, and he had also taken his first pupil, Gerard Dow. Everything is rather early, rather precocious, with Rembrandt. He got up early in the morning of life, and set to work at a time when others are dreaming about what they intend to do. It has been assumed that the little etchings of 1628 were portraits of Rembrandt's mother, and they are so entered in Blanc's catalogue, but there is no evidence in favour of such an idea. According to Vosmaer the mother was about thirty-five years old at the date of Rembrandt's birth, consequently she would be about fifty-six when he came of age, but the old lady in the etching looks past seventy.[1]

There is just one etching for 1629, and that is an excellent proof of the tendency to vary his styles and make experiments, which was in Rembrandt's nature, and remained with him through life. The title of it in Mr. Middleton's catalogue is *Rembrandt, a Bust; supposed to be engraved on Pewter* (B. 336. M. 7.). It is a rough sketch in a bold and decided manner, without any attempt at delicacy of tone or even of line, but immense vivacity of handling, and the peculiarity of it is that some of the shading is done with a double point, as if two points had been tied together, which they probably were. Many etchers have tried that experiment for greater speed in shading, but it does not really advance matters very much, and Rembrandt never afterwards recurred to it.

The year 1630 is remarkable for a series of small plates, in which the artist amused himself in studying expression by assuming it in his own features. The practice may easily be represented as ridiculous, and has, no doubt, a ludicrous aspect, as it is difficult to think quite seriously of a grown man making faces, as children do, before a glass. It has been

[1] Many women after seventy are better preserved than Rembrandt's old lady; Queen Victoria is an instance, and in quiet middle-class life good preservation is by no means rare. This Dutchwoman, tranquil and fairly well off, might very well be eighty. I have known a younger-looking lady at ninety-three.

done occasionally by modern actors for instantaneous photography, and with this result, that when the costume is changed at the same time as the expression the original human being becomes unrecognisable. Rembrandt himself is not always immediately recognised in these etchings, but we get accustomed to the changes in his physiognomy, in his headgear, and in the length of his hair. We have him "with an open mouth" (B. 13. M. 22.); "with an air of grimace" (B. 10. M. 23.); "with haggard eyes" (B. 320. M. 24.); and "laughing" (B. 316. M. 25.). These little plates, and others, probably of the same date, or very near it, are executed with a fine point, and are distinguished by an extreme manual facility. The evident speed of their execution does not, however, prevent the artist from noticing the most minute truths of form and of light and shade, as, for example, in the learnedly reserved reflec

Rembrandt, Full Face, Laughing.
B. 316. *M.* 25.

Rembrandt with an Air of Grimace.
B. 10. *M.* 23.

Rembrandt with Haggard Eyes.
B. 320. *M.* 24.

tions in the shading of *Rembrandt with an open Mouth* (B. 13. M. 22.). There may be haste in such work as this, but there is no carelessness, and as for vitality it is superabundant, both in the subjects and the execution.

In the same year, 1630, Rembrandt made two serious etchings of himself, one "with curly hair rising into a tuft over the right eye" (B. 27. M. 26.) the other "with fur cap and light dress" (B. 24. M. 27.). Both these plates are very lightly sketched in the manner that the French call "croquis." The one with the fur cap is a pleasant and probably very truthful likeness of the artist at the age of twenty-three, without

any flattery as to form, but having the air of a young man at the same time very intelligent and perfectly satisfied with himself. The other gives a fine idea of Rembrandt's abundant head of hair which resembles as to quantity the wigs of the eighteenth century. It may be that he sometimes added in his paintings and etchings to the liberal gifts of nature, as in portraits of the same year the hair is at one time prodigious and at another ordinary. For example, in *Rembrandt with Haggard Eyes*, there is not enough of it to attract attention.

Rembrandt now began his long series of etchings of scriptural subjects. One, dated 1630, is a *Jesus Disputing with the Doctors* (B. 66. M. 177.), a small plate, delicately etched, but very grandly conceived, and another of the same year is *The Presentation with the Angel* (B. 51. M. 178.), called so because an angel with wings appears over the left shoulder of Anna the prophetess. Like the *Jesus Disputing*, this plate is of small dimensions and slight rather than powerful execution.

Two Beggars, a Man and a Woman Conversing. B. 164. M. 37.

It seems highly probable that Rembrandt began to etch beggars very early in life, as the style that he adopted for that class of subject was quite fully developed in 1630, and there are several etchings of that year, dated, which are not inferior in execution to the numerous beggar subjects of later years. There are also some good portrait studies, for example, *An Old Man with a Large Beard, the Shoulders lower than the Ears* (B. 309, M. 31), which is one of Rembrandt's finest studies of old age. There is the *Profile of a Bald Man* (B. 292. M. 39.) and the *Portrait of a Man with a broad-brimmed Hat and a Ruff* which is unquestionably one of the most entirely satisfactory of Rembrandt's simpler little plates (B. 311. M. 28.).

I have dwelt in some detail on these plates because they have a

special interest as showing what a good start Rembrandt made in etching, and how early in life. We have now to remember that at the age of twenty-one he executed the little plate of the old lady, which has never been surpassed in its own way, and that at twenty-three he had tried his hand, with rare success, on a variety of subjects and in three or four different styles. He was already in the peculiar situation of an artist who has left himself no room for improvement except in attempting art of another kind, and in overcoming new, though possibly not greater difficulties.

With the exception of the six months spent in the studio of Pieter Lastman, Rembrandt had hitherto remained entirely with his parents at Leyden, as his three years' pupilage with Swanenburch, then a Leyden artist, does not imply any change of residence. Rembrandt's youth had been free from every care but that of his own progress in art. His parents were in easy circumstances in the burgher class

A View of Amsterdam. *B.* 210. *M.* 304.

and if he had not received a full classical education it was only because he had not taken to it. Born for the graphic arts, he had taken to painting and etching with the utmost interest and immediate success. This justified him in establishing himself as an artist with a house and studio of his own, and he selected Amsterdam rather than Leyden as a place of residence, though the choice involved a separation from

his father, who died about two years later, from his mother, who lived on for twenty years, and from his four brothers and two sisters who were all living at that time. Settled in Amsterdam in 1630, Rembrandt resumed his etching. The plates dated 1631 include twenty-seven portraits and studies, one "fancy composition," if a single figure deserves the title, but no religious subject. This year the portraits include five of himself, of which the most perfect, technically, is *Rembrandt with Round Fur Cap, full face* (B. 16. M. 45.) but that is in the earlier style. The desire for new conquests is shown in the larger *Rembrandt with Broad Hat and Embroidered Mantle* (B. 7. M. 52.) in which the etcher has laboriously aimed at high finish and rich textures without, however, abandoning his former delicate treatment of light passages as in the collar and the lighted side of the face and hair. It may be noted as a sign of increasing prosperity and self-respect that the young painter, instead of pulling faces in the glass, now poses before it with the air and costume of a well-bred gentleman. Another very fine portrait of this time is that of the *Man with a Short Beard and Embroidered Cloak* (B. 263. M. 77.), full of clear and decided drawing without any over-finish. The student may observe how completely explanatory, with few lines, is the treatment of the costume. Rembrandt still retains his former interest in old age and proves it by a wonderfully beautiful *Bust of an Old Man with a Long Beard* (B. 260. M. 62.). The wrinkled forehead would no doubt have been accepted by Barry as a proof of Rembrandt's "ignorant diligence" in copying "the multiplied wrinkles and trifling peculiarities of the skin." This is one of the most perfect of Rembrandt's lighter and more delicate etchings, and there is another charming little sketch plate of an old bearded man with the date of 1631 (B. 315. M. 63.). In this year Rembrandt went on with his series of beggars, but without any change of style, and etched in the same light manner a clever plate of very small dimensions known as *The Little Polander* (B. 142. M. 79.). One of the most important works of the year was the portrait of *Rembrandt's Mother, her Hand resting upon her Breast* (B. 348. M. 55.). This etching belongs to the same class of serious, highly finished, and dignified works as the portrait of the artist himself with the *Broad Hat and Embroidered*

Mantle. It was a new style with Rembrandt then and these works have an air which implies that he took a certain pride in it. Certainly this portrait of his mother is one of the most beautiful etchings he ever produced. The contrasts of delicacy and strength of line in flesh and costume are extreme but never offensive. They occur always in the right place and however easy the workmanship there is no carelessness.

For the year 1632 there is nothing dated, in the way of studies and portraits, except a vastly broad figure of a Persian "swell" (there is no other word for him) who goes swaggering along with cloak, and fringes, and medal, and cane, and plume! It is a charming example of the serio-comical, admirably etched in a light incisive way (B. 152. M. 91.). The same year is marked by a return to religious subjects in a St. Jerome, praying passionately, *St. Jerome Kneeling, an Arched Print* (B. 101. M. 183.). Notwithstanding the difference of subject, St. Jerome is etched in the same light and clever manner as the distinguished Persian. This, too, is the year of *The Rat Killer* (B. 121. M. 261.), one of Rembrandt's characteristic plates of popular subjects reminding us in that respect of Ostade, and also in the complete absence of local colour. The execution is like that of some of the beggar series but not so lively as the best of them. It is a complete Dutch picture as to composition, though the light-and-shade is little more than indicated.

I have never admired the portrait of 1633, *Rembrandt with a Scarf round his Neck* (B. 17, M. 99). The face is almost entirely in shade, except a little sunshine on the left cheek, and as the shading is heavy, coarse, and over-bitten, it looks as if the original had had his face blackened.

It is most difficult to give a satisfactory account of Rembrandt's etched work for the year 1633, as it so happens that some of the most important parts of what is attributed to him for that year are subjects of doubt and discussion, and must therefore be reserved for later consideration. There is no evidence that Rembrandt made any progress as an etcher in that year. What was intended to be a very important plate, a great *Descent from the Cross*, was entirely ruined in the biting, ruined past redemption, so that after two or three trial proofs the plate was abandoned. A second plate of the same composition appears to have been

etched by another hand. We know from the number of pictures signed by Rembrandt at this time or soon after that he was most industriously occupied with painting, and he now began, probably for commercial reasons, to make compositions for large plates full of tiresome work and for which he would naturally be tempted to employ assistants. The experience of all etchers has shown that the big commercial plate is an artistic error, whatever may be its immediate pecuniary advantages. There is, however, a very little plate, *An Old Woman etched no lower than the Chin* (B. 351, M. 101), which is a return, without any visible improvement, to the artist's simplest and most elementary style of five years before.

An Old Woman etched no lower than the Chin.
B. 351, *M.* 101.

The production of large commercial plates, as well as the painting of many pictures about this time, may have been connected with ideas of marriage in obedience to the Shakespearian rule, "Put money in thy purse." In June 1634 Rembrandt married Saskia van Ulenburgh at Bilt in Friesland. She was a young lady of good family, and although Rembrandt was not in the least worldly or what is called a "society man," still, as his marriage improved his social position, he may have been tempted to some display about this time. It was a very brilliant marriage for a young artist. Vosmaer tells us that Saskia gave Rembrandt admission "into a distinguished family, whose members illustrated the magistrature, science, literature, and the arts." She also brought Rembrandt a good fortune, and there is evidence that the marriage was a happy one.

There are uncertainties and disappointments in etching even for the most experienced masters, and one of the worst plates that Rembrandt ever made, if, indeed, he did entirely execute it with his own hand, is the portrait of *Jan Sylvius* (B. 266. M. 110.), that of 1634, which is not to be confounded with the fine later portrait of Sylvius preaching, executed four years later. The first Sylvius does not show Rembrandt's usual skill in drawing (look at the right nostril and the wooden hands) whilst the shading is heavy and of poor quality, being without any effectual varieties of tone, texture, and handling. Admiration of bad

work like this, whether sincere or feigned, only diminishes the value of that which is rightly given to good examples of the art. It is interesting to observe that in the same year (1634) Rembrandt recurred to the very simplest and most elementary (but often most satisfactory) kind of etching, clear line and plain shading, in some studies of beggars which are admirable examples of such work, to be recommended to the attention of all practical beginners.

The year 1634 is that of the very celebrated etching called *The Great Jewish Bride* (B. 340. M. 108.). This title has nothing to do with the bigness of the bride herself; it is merely used to distinguish the plate from a smaller one of another person. M. Charles Blanc made it out to his own satisfaction that this is really a portrait of Saskia, Rembrandt's wife, his strongest argument being that the plate was executed in the year of his marriage. The other argument, based on likeness to known portraits of Saskia, is untenable. The two women are not of the same feminine type. The Saskia who is in the plate called *Rembrandt and his Wife* (B. 19. M. 128.) is a bright-looking, intelligent woman, and so is the lady, evidently the same person, in *Rembrandt's Wife and Five other Heads* (B. 365. M. 129.). The Jewish Bride, on the other hand, has certainly less than the usual intelligence of her race. She is a fine woman, physically, and she has magnificent hair, but she is only a fine woman and Saskia is much more. Besides, the Jewish lady looks as if she could be bad-tempered, which Saskia does not. The Jewess has a low forehead, a large ugly mouth with protruding lower lip, and a very dark complexion; Saskia's forehead is high, her mouth small and pretty, and her complexion fair. M. Charles Blanc believed that the uppermost of the *Three Heads of Women* (B. 367. M. 115.) had at least been suggested by Saskia. This seems very probable, the face is pleasant and intelligent.

The Great Jewish Bride, in its finished state, is an attempt at complete tonality. It is more successful in that respect than the first portrait of Sylvius, but I may be excused for preferring the costume portrait which Mr. Middleton calls *Portrait, Unknown, of a Man with a Sabre* (B. 23. M. 111.), but which Mr. Haden and others have believed to be Rembrandt himself. M. Charles Blanc was disposed to abandon this idea, as there is not much likeness to other self-portraits of the master

and there is a wart on this face that does not occur in the others. Blanc saw a likeness to the Duke of Gueldres, but the search of an original is unnecessary, as the etching is most probably a fancy piece, only bearing some resemblance to Rembrandt himself, without pretending to be a likeness. It is very cleverly executed. The shade on the face is too black, which may probably be accounted for by the original intention

Three Heads of Women. *B.* 367. *M.* 115.

to use the copper as an ornamental plate on a box rather than for printing. There was, however, in Rembrandt's work at this time a decided tendency to over-shading, the consequence of those experiments in full tonality which all etchers seem to be, at one time in their lives, tempted to make. A charming plate of this year, *A Young Woman reading* (B. 345, M. 109.), is injured by too great darkness and heaviness in the shading of the face. In the same year, 1634, we find two small plates of religious subjects, *The Samaritan Woman—at the Ruins* (B. 71.

M. 195.) and *Jesus and the Disciples at Emmaus* (B. 88. M. 194.) in which full tonality is not attempted. There are, however, some reasons for believing that Rembrandt borrowed the conception of these works from other artists. Mr. Haden suggests Dow for the *Samaritan Woman*. *The Martyrdom of St. Stephen* (B. 97. M. 197) is a work of the same class, well composed, brilliant and effective, but far from being one of the

A Young Woman reading. B. 345. M. 109.

best drawn amongst Rembrandt's etchings ; the lower part of St. Stephen's body is very difficult to defend or account for satisfactorily. There is bad drawing, too, in the poor plate of *Jesus Christ Driving out the Money Changers* (B. 69. M. 198.), of which the principal figure is borrowed from Albert Dürer, whilst the miserable cow, besides being much too small, is hardly better as a study of animal life than the scared cattle in the large plate of *The Angel appearing to the Shepherds* (B. 44. M. 191.). The

truth is that Rembrandt was a most unequal artist and that there is no regularity in his onward course. He was always ready to etch with a new aim and adopt some style in which he had not much previous experience, the attempt being sometimes successful and sometimes partially or completely a failure. We have seen how he attempted complete tonality in *The Great Jewish Bride* and woodcut effects in three of the smaller religious compositions. It is strange that the author of these plates could and did, nearly at the same date, etch such a marvellously perfect little masterpiece as *The Mountebank* (B. 129. M. 117.). The execution is most intelligent, not a line too many nor a shade too dark, and no one doubts that it is by the hand of Rembrandt, though the original idea of the subject has been attributed to Jan Van de Velde. The well-known portrait of *Johannes Uijtenbogaerd* (B. 279. M. 114.) is a realisation of that complete scale of lights and darks which Rembrandt had for some time, in an intermittent way, been aiming at. It is very fortunate that the desire for depth and richness did not lead, in this instance, to any overshading of the face which is delicately and most observantly drawn. There is an early state of the plate before the darkening of the background. As in the *Uijtenbogaerd* the scheme of light and dark is a bright centre surrounded by dark shades, so in *The Pancake Woman* (B. 124. M. 264.) the scheme is a dark figure surrounded by lighter ones and by a light background. The style is as different as possible from that of the other plates of the year 1635. The idea and composition are hardly like Rembrandt and have been credited to the original author of *The Mountebank.*

The Mountebank.
B. 129. *M.* 117.

Rembrandt continued the practice of his lighter style in 1636. For example, the portrait of *Menasseh Ben Israel* (B. 269. M. 127.) is an excellent example of plain straightforward etching in clearly bitten black line. I take the liberty of recommending it as a good model for amateurs; if they think such etching does not look delicate enough they can work over it, sparingly and judiciously, in dry point. Mr. Middleton says

that Menasseh Ben Israel "was one of Rembrandt's most intimate friends, living near him in the Breedstraat. He early established his reputation as an author; and it shows the high estimation in which he was held

THE PRODIGAL SON. *B.* 91. *M.* 201.

by his co-religionists that he was deputed by them to undertake a mission to the Protector Cromwell to obtain from him the recall of the Jews to England."

A very important little work from the biographical point of view is

the etching of *Rembrandt and his Wife* (B. 19. M. 128.). By an effect of what is called "exaggerated perspective,"[1] Rembrandt's face appears enormous in comparison with that of Saskia. It is pleasant to know that she was a good wife to him, and that their short married life was a happy one. She appears again in the plate of sketches called *Rembrandt's Wife and Five other Heads* (B. 365. M. 129.). They are all masterly sketches without more than a clear suggestion of light and shade. The year 1636 is also the date of *The Prodigal Son* (B. 91. M. 201.), an etching in Rembrandt's simplest manner, not agreeable at first sight, as there is little charm of execution and the personages, especially the wretched youth himself, are ill-favoured, but the subject has never been treated with deeper imaginative sympathy. The repentant humility of the son and the affectionate forgiving tenderness of the father are enough to disarm criticism.

IV

The years through which we are now passing were the happiest of Rembrandt's life. The great fertility of his mind and hand and a habit of regarding an "old master" as a very experienced man may easily make us forget that in 1637 Rembrandt was only thirty years old and his beloved Saskia only twenty-five. Yet if Rembrandt had died at that time his name would still have survived as that of a great master. He had already done some of his very best work both in painting and etching. He had painted *The Anatomical Lesson* five years before and, before that or after, many a picture now in the most famous collections of the world. As for what he had done in etching, I need only say that the plates I have mentioned give an inadequate idea as I have restricted myself, hitherto, to those which bear a date. Rembrandt was a man of great courage, great fortitude, so that he bore

[1] The expression is not accurate but we know what is meant by it. When the draughtsman is too near to the nearest objects which he represents, he may draw them quite truthfully and accurately and yet make them look too big relatively to what is behind them. This is a very common fault even in the present day and in the works of the most distinguished draughtsmen, who do not seem to perceive how objectionable it is.

well in later life the stress and strain of sorrow, solitude, and adversity, but it is pleasant to think that he lived the golden days of his life's summer at Amsterdam with Saskia, a summer of fame and love, of pecuniary ease and peace, surrounded by works of art, and in a large richly furnished mansion which we may be sure that Saskia, as a Dutch lady of good family, would keep for him in the most exquisite cleanliness and order. It is true that there had been changes in the old paternal home at Leyden. Rembrandt's father, Harmen, had died about 1632, his mother lost three of her children before 1640 and lived with her youngest daughter Lijsbeth. The eldest son Adriaen, who was seventeen years older than Rembrandt, kept on the paternal mill. Such was the situation of Rembrandt and his family when he was thirty years old. He was already a father, his son Rumbartus having been born in December 1635.

Three of the most perfect of Rembrandt's smaller plates belong to the year 1637. We have *Abraham sending away Hagar and Ishmael* (B. 30. M. 204.), an exquisite work by no means overcharged with labour, and not pretending to be in full tone, yet extremely rich in materials and in the abundant but not obtrusive indication of details. The dramatic action of the figures is very finely conceived, especially that of the majestic, unpitying patriarch. In the same year we find a portrait, also of the patriarchal type, *An Old Man wearing a rich Velvet Cap* (B. 313. M. 131.) highly finished, but not over-shaded and well preserving the different qualities of flesh, and hair, and dress in which it is much superior, for example, to the *Young Woman reading* (B. 345. M. 109.) though that is also, in other ways, an excellent etching. A very admirable portrait of 1637 is *A Young Man seated, turned to the Left* (B. 268. M. 132.). This is called in the French catalogues "Jeune homme assis et réfléchissant" because he has a serious expression of thoughtful meditation. Without being so highly finished as the portrait just described it is equally sound in workmanship and unquestionably one of the most faultless pieces in the whole collection. It always strongly reminds me of Francia's absorbing and entrancing picture of the melancholy young man in the Louvre. The reader will remember that in 1636 Rembrandt made several sketches of heads on the same copper, including a pretty portrait of Saskia. He repeated the experiment in

1637 with one head as a study of sleep. The etching is entered in Mr. Middleton's catalogue as *Three Heads of Women, One asleep* (B. 368. M. 130.). The plate is not quite so light and elegant in touch and treatment as that of the preceding year, nor are the models so agreeable, but the sleeping woman is most closely observed.

I hope the reader will not take it as evidence of disrespect towards our first parents if I say that it is impossible to look at Rembrandt's etching of *Adam and Eve* (B. 38. M. 206.) without a lively sense of the ludicrous. Rembrandt did not flatter our vanity by telling us that we had such ancestors as these. So remote are they from all our notions of what is comely in the human form, that one regrets the impossibility (whilst remaining faithful to the text) of providing them with decent habiliments. Even M. Dutuit, with all his admiration for Rembrandt, admits that "Adam et Ève ont réellement une figure repoussante." So, indeed, they have, and yet, in spite of their ugliness, the etching as a whole is far from being destitute of artistic beauty. It is finely composed and well lighted. The dragon that represents the serpent is grandly conceived, and the attitudes of Adam and Eve would have been appreciated in handsomer bodies. The manual execution of the simple linear work all about the tree and dragon is strong and masterly, bearing some resemblance to the pen-drawing of Titian.

A less questionable scriptural subject of this year is *Joseph telling his Dreams* (B 37. M. 205.), a rich little composition, as the subject was a good pretext for crowding many figures into a small space. This etching is closely related in style to such plates as the little one of *The Disciples at Emmaus* and *The Stoning of St. Stephen.* The portraits of the year include *Rembrandt in Mezetin Cap and Feather* (B. 20. M. 134.), a plate which looks less effective than many others because there are no intense blacks, and because it is almost uniformly etched with a fine point throughout, but there is much beautiful drawing in it, and much character, and Mr. Middleton observes that, "when rich in tone and exquisitely clear, as in the superb impression at Amsterdam, it is a work of singular beauty."

There is a well-known little etching of 1638, which has been called by two different names, *Saint Catherine*, and also *The Little Jewish Bride* (B. 342. M. 135.). It is pretty, both from the pleasing character of

the model and the absence of all pretension in her pose. The execution is equally unpretending, the very simplicity of treatment and biting having led to a certain wiriness in the hair. Some believe that this is a study of Saskia, but this girlish face is not like that of the clever-looking young woman in the plate of sketches (B. 365. M. 129.), and, for my part, I remain incredulous. The title *Saint Catherine* was suggested by the wheel in the corner.

V.

Rembrandt's family increased in the year 1638, when Saskia had a little girl whom they called Cornelya, but she lived only from the twenty-second of July to the sixteenth of August.

Two changes of residence may also be noted, but for these we have not precise dates. In February 1636 he had quitted the Breedstraat, and was living in the Niewe Doelstraat. In January 1639 he lived on the interior quay of the Amstel in a house called the Suijkerbackerij We do not exactly know at what date he left this residence for his fine mansion in the Jodenbreedstraat.

The year 1639 is of great importance in the history of Rembrandt's career as an etcher. He had already done such excellent work that it seems as if improvement must have been impossible, but his experiments in various directions appear to have left a temporary conviction in his mind that etchings loaded with heavy work, like *The Great Jewish Bride*, were not the best adapted to expression in this art, and that a lighter style was preferable. Nevertheless, his experience in various styles, even in the heaviest (as in the background and lower part of Johannes Uijtenbogaerd) had increased his power of execution. The portrait of himself, *Rembrandt Leaning on a Stone Sill* (B. 21. M. 137.), is a splendid example of high culture in the art of etching, going far enough in the darks for the expression of power but completely, even in the darkest parts, avoiding the mere thickness and density of printing ink, whilst the treble notes of this linear music are light and clear and faithfully true in tone. Observe how greatly superior is the shading on this face to that of *Rembrandt with a Scarf round his Neck* (B. 17. M. 99.) or to the face-blackening of *Rembrandt with Bushy Hair and*

Small White Collar (B. 1. M. 51.) or to that of *Rembrandt in a Fur Cap and Dark Dress* (B. 6. M. 17.). The hair, too, is treated with great skill, and in such a manner as to convey at the same time the sense of mass and a certain vigour of individual growth in the hairs themselves. It is far better, for example, than the coarse hair of *The Great Jewish Bride*, and, in itself, a sufficient answer to Mr. Ruskin's statement that nobody had ever etched hair. It would be interesting to see an attempt to copy it with a burin. The technical excellence of this plate is accompanied by a most animated expression of countenance; not histrionic, as in the studies of assumed expressions, but that of a keen intelligence in its ordinary condition of observant wakefulness.

Another great masterpiece, small and slight as it may look, is *Youth Surprised by Death* (B. 109. M. 265.), a plate very lightly sketched but with a rare degree of delicacy and elegance both in the execution and in the conception of the subject. No one able to feel the charm of first-rate sketching would wish to see a line added to such a performance as this, or a shade of it darkened.

And lastly, this year 1639 brings us to the magnificent *Death of the Virgin* (B. 99. M. 207.), which if the dimensions of the copper, the nobility and grandeur of the conception, and beauty of style in execution are all to be taken into account, is certainly the greatest of all Rembrandt's works. It is not so popular as *Jesus Christ healing the Sick* (the Hundred Guilder Print) for which one reason may be that it has not so striking an effect of chiaroscuro, but it is equal to it both in human sympathy and in picturesque treatment, and superior in the superb energy of its most masterly style. I am well aware that such a display of manual power, of executive *bravura*, is incompatible with the perfection of form, and I know that the shapes of the angels will not bear scrutiny, still there is much wonderful drawing in the Virgin herself, and in the people round the death-bed.

VI

The year 1640 is marked in the biography of Rembrandt by his mother's death, which took place in the month of September, at Leyden. He had a second daughter this year, who was baptized in July, and received the name of the first, Cornelya. There is no dated etching of 1640 worth special mention except the *Portrait, Unknown, of an Old Man with a Divided Fur Cap* (B. 265. M. 145.), a work of great dignity and beauty, but not likely to be popular from the absence of vigorous blacks. It is, however, admirably drawn, and though the distinctions of tone and local colour are slight this etching is one of the most faultless that Rembrandt ever executed, and perfectly harmonious in its own key.

This brings us to the year 1641 when, in all probability, Rembrandt removed to his fine house in the Jodenbreedstraat. My limits are too restricted for more than an occasional glance at the artist's private life. With the help of the inventory of Rembrandt's effects, Vosmaer made a most interesting description of the interior of the house with its well-furnished entrance hall where there were six Spanish chairs and twenty-four pictures, then the antechamber full of pictures including a Palma Vecchio, a Bassano, and a Raphael; there were also a mirror in an ebony frame, a big walnut table with a Tournay table-cover, and Spanish chairs with cushions in green velvet. Beyond this room again was another room that interests us particularly, for here was Rembrandt's private press. However, it was not a bare and simple printing room, but rather a picture gallery, including, as in Turner's gallery two hundred years later, only too many of the prolific artist's unsold works, now of inestimable value, but along with these many pictures by other masters. Here he had his etching-table with the usual shade to temper the light, and his oaken printing press, which was, I fear, but a clumsy piece of mechanism in comparison with the iron machines that our scientific makers construct for us to-day. Then there was a general sitting-room, also full of pictures, by Rembrandt himself and others, including a Raphael and large Giorgione.

So much for the ground floor. Above it were a suite of rooms more like a museum than apartments in a private mansion. There was a rich

collection of paintings, sculpture, casts, porcelain, and armour, besides many natural objects that had a picturesque interest for the master, such as plants, shells, and stuffed birds, in a word everything that could charm or amuse the most cultivated visual sense. There was a smaller room near to this, also a museum, and then came the studio adorned with a quantity of arms and costumes, a vestibule with lions' skins, and a small study rich in pictures. The collection of books consisted chiefly of volumes of drawings and engravings, abundant enough to prove the keen interest that Rembrandt took in the works of others.

The reader may imagine him living in this palace of art with his dear Saskia, the steps of Death, however rapidly advancing, as yet inaudible in the distance.

The etchings of 1641 are remarkable for an extreme diversity of manner and also, with one notable exception, for a general appearance of haste as if their author had been too much occupied with his painting to bestow much time upon his secondary art. The exception to this rule is the highly finished portrait of *Cornelis Anslo* (B. 271. M. 146.) which may have been taken as a model by our modern etchers from pictures. It was, in fact, executed deliberately from a drawing. Another attempt at full tone, but much coarser in execution, is a black little plate of this year entitled *The Schoolmaster* (B. 128. M. 271.). It is a night effect—a schoolmaster with several children arriving at the door of a house and a woman is speaking to him from the inside. What light there is comes from the interior.

Amongst the etchings of 1641 is a curiously mediæval-looking *Portrait of a Man with a Crucifix and Chain* (B. 261. M. 147.). It is not merely that the costume is of a time anterior to that of Rembrandt, but he has adopted an archaic interpretation of life. In works really his own there is always expression of some kind, but here the face is as void of mind as it is of beauty. The same model, in the same costume, but less elaborated, reappears in *A Man Playing Cards* (B. 136. M. 269.), a rapid sketch on copper. Another sketch is that of *The Virgin and Child in the Clouds* (B. 61. M. 211.), which only proves how little the genius of Rembrandt was fitted to rise above the earth and its familiar realities, and the same may be said of *The Angel ascending from Tobit and his Family* (B. 43. M. 213.), where the substantial legs and feet of the angel in the

air (all that is seen of him) inevitably suggest those of Harlequin leaping through the window.

The Baptism of the Eunuch (B. 98. M. 210.) is a sketch principally *au trait*, and *The Large Lion Hunt* (B. 114. M. 272.) is a far swifter sketch of a most spirited composition, in the execution of which the

The Angel ascending from Tobit and his Family. *B.* 43. *M.* 213.

artist has not given himself time enough for any accuracy in form. *Three Oriental Figures* (B. 118. M. 212.[1]) may be taken as an example

[1] In Mr. Middleton's catalogue this plate is entered as *Jacob and Laban*, a title given to it by M. Charles Blanc. It has, however, been cogently pointed out by M. Dutuit that the incident which Blanc supposed to have been illustrated by this etching occurred in camp life. Laban had followed Jacob, who had pitched his tent in the mount of Gilead ; Laban stopped and encamped near him, and then went to Jacob's tent to remonstrate with him for having stolen his goods. In the etching we see nothing of the picturesque of camp life, which Rembrandt, who was a close reader of the Bible, and a great lover of the picturesque, would have been sure to seize upon. Instead of that, we have a house without even any signs of travelling, only three people in Eastern costume who have come to speak to the occupant. I called the plate "Jacob and Laban" in *Etching and Etchers*, merely from deference to Charles Blanc. However, I

of simple linear work, with a suggestion of shade, the whole without any attempt at delicacy in biting, so that the plate remained in a good condition for printing even to our own time, and I had an edition taken from it in the year 1868.

The activity of Rembrandt's observant mind was always likely to lead him in new directions, and it is not surprising to find him, in 1641, turning his attention to landscape, for which he had a strong natural sentiment. Two plates of this year, *A Large Landscape with a Dutch Hay Barn* (B. 225. M. 306.) and *A Large Landscape with a Mill-sail* (B. 226. M. 307.) are of more importance, perhaps, as examples of Rembrandt's skill in the treatment of picturesque rustic buildings than as interpretations of pure nature, but although the buildings predominate the foregrounds are treated with a lively sense of beauty in vegetation and the distances are delightful. Rembrandt had already fixed, in its essentials, his method of interpretation in landscape. Another plate of 1641, *The Mill, often called Rembrandt's Mill*[1] (B. 233. M. 305.), is a proof of his interest in picturesque buildings with a distance of very slight importance, though not without its own decided character.

VII

In the year 1641 Rembrandt had a son, Titus, baptized in the December[2] of that year.

In the month of June, 1642, he lost his beloved Saskia, who died at the early age of twenty-nine years and eleven months, her husband being then within a few weeks of thirty-five. So the fine house, with all its treasures, was made desolate, and the still young widower was left with his little child Titus.[3] Courage and strength of will remained to him, but the perfection of his happiness was gone for ever.

mentioned the other title also. The plain truth is that nobody knows what Rembrandt intended to illustrate in this plate, or whether he had any intention at all, beyond the mere grouping of some picturesque personages.

[1] M. Dutuit says, "This mill is not that where Rembrandt is said to have been born. We know positively that he was not born in a building of this kind. It is thought that this mill was situated at Carwijk, on the Rhine."

[2] Vosmaer says December in his text and September in the pedigree.

[3] Vosmaer does not give the dates of death for the first boy Rumbartus, and the

The dated etchings for this sad year are neither numerous nor important. There is a *St. Jerome: in Rembrandt's dark Manner* (B. 105.

The Resurrection of Lazarus, A Small Print. B. 72. M. 215.

M. 214.) of which I shall have more to say elsewhere, a very slight linear sketch *The Descent from the Cross* (B. 82. M. 216.) a study of

second girl Cornelya. Mr. Middleton says, "to this marriage were born four children, three of whom died in their earliest infancy, the fourth, Titus, alone survived." M. Dutuit uses almost the same expressions.

The Three Trees. *B.* 212. *M.* 309.

a picturesque cottage with a boarded fence entitled *A Cottage with White Pales* (B. 232. M. 308.) and *The Resurrection of Lazarus: a Small Print* (B. 72. M. 215.). The last is known in French catalogues as *La Petite Résurrection de Lazare*, and will be referred to later in comparison with the large etching of the same subject.

The year 1643 brings us to two good things—an excellent animal study *The Hog* (B. 157. M. 277.), in which the animal is represented lying down with its hind legs tied together, and a fine landscape well known to all lovers of Rembrandt as *The Three Trees* (B. 212. M. 309.). I happen to know by a positive test, that this plate is far more popular than one would have been likely to imagine. The best test of popularity is the separate sale of Amand-Durand's reproductions. He tells me that this plate sells better than any other.[1] It is a grand suggestion of landscape effect, but without any attempt (probably without any desire) to imitate the quality of clouds or the softness of falling rain.

I have only found one signed etching for 1644, a small plate called *The Shepherd and his Family* (B. 220. M. 310.).

It is unquestionable that after the death of Saskia Rembrandt was led much more than formerly to the study of landscape. He probably went out more, or his walks were more solitary, so he made sketches from nature, sometimes on paper, sometimes directly on the copper. For the year 1645 we have the *View of Omval, near Amsterdam* (B. 209. M. 311.), an important and masterly performance, and also the summary sketch of *Six's Bridge* (B. 208. M. 313.), a first-rate example of rapid selection in landscape by which all the parts of a scene, in their due relations, are described with a minimum of labour. The influence of this plate is visible in the slighter works of many modern artists, particularly in those of Jongkind. Two religious subjects of this year, *St. Peter* (B. 96. M. 219.), and *A Repose* (B. 58. M. 218.), are slightly sketched and very little bitten, that little being in one biting. Possibly Rembrandt may not have intended to leave the plates in this condition,

[1] Judging by his separate sales, M. Amand-Durand believes that *Christ Healing the Sick* (the Hundred Guilder Print) is the most popular of Rembrandt's etchings, but its sales are not so large as those of *The Three Trees*, because the price of it is six francs, whilst that of *The Three Trees* is four only. Still, it is very surprising that a landscape should come second, as many of the figure-subjects are sold for its price, or less.

but they are charming sketches, answering, in etching, to work done with the silver point or a very hard, well-sharpened, lead pencil.

The reader will remember that mention was made of a portrait of J. C. Sylvius, etched in 1634. I ventured to say that I did not admire it. I do, however, very heartily appreciate the merits of the etching of 1646. *Jan Cornelis Sylvius ; an oval Portrait* (B. 280. M. 155.) is one of Rembrandt's finest works, as the other, if entirely by his hand, ought to be frankly classed amongst his failures. Still, even this expressive and most life-like portrait of the preacher is injured by the superfluous work round

Six's Bridge. B. 208. *M.* 313.

about it, by the rude oval frame, by the too numerous engraved words, and also by the dull shading in the background which has so little artistic quality that it may easily have been put in by an assistant. The face is so strong and earnest in its eloquence that after looking at it for a minute we feel ourselves to belong to the congregation. "He, being dead, yet speaketh."

The year 1646 may be noted for some attempts in a kind of art for which etching is not particularly well qualified, the representation of the naked figure. Two studies of that year deserve especial attention, *An*

Academical Figure seated on the Ground (B. 196. M. 278), and *A Figure, formerly called "The Prodigal Son"* (B. 193. M. 279). It appears that the second is still called "The Prodigal Son" in Holland though it is obviously nothing more than an ordinary study of the nude. The model is seated on a stool or chair behind which is a dark curtain that puts his flesh into vigorous relief. He is etched strongly and simply as one might sketch with a pen, and without any idealisation of the forms. The other study has the same general characteristics but without such strong oppositions of light and shade. They are good straightforward sketch studies of very poor models, executed on the principles of the strictest realism. After saying this, I need not add that they are far from being beautiful, but they are honest and strong work.

Two etchings, only, bear the date of 1647, but these two are of capital importance. One is the noble portrait of *Ephraim Bonus* (B. 278. M. 158.) and the other the not less remarkable *Portrait of Jan Six* (B. 285. M. 159.). It was Rembrandt's habit to try over and over again for some quality that he desired but not to fatigue himself by toiling continuously for the same object. He always gave himself intervals, not of leisure, but of variety in his work, after which he tried again to do better what he had before attempted with more or less partial success. Almost every etcher has tried, at one period of his existence, to etch a plate in full tone. It is not necessary, as some of the finest etchings present only a selection of tones, but it seems to be an inevitable ambition, as every prose-writer has written verse and every engraver has tried to colour. These two etchings are both in full tone. Ephraim Bonus was a Jewish physician, he has been to see a patient, and is still, perhaps, reflecting on the case as he pauses with his hand on the banister of the stair. The plate looks like an etching from a picture, and there is, or was, in the Six collection a portrait of Bonus in the same attitude painted by Rembrandt, on the same scale as the etching.

The portrait of Jan Six is unquestionably Rembrandt's masterpiece in the way of highly-finished shading, and was evidently executed with the intention of carrying his art, for once, as far as was possible for him in that special direction. For a hand like his, accustomed to the utmost freedom, such success in patient labour may appear surprising, but it

has an exact parallel in the high finish of some of Rembrandt's paintings. The interest of the plate is, however, by no means limited to its technical excellence. It is a charming, and was in its own day also a new and original, presentation of a cultivated gentleman in the privacy of his own room. Tranquillity and sobriety in everything are here the dominant notes. The subject appears quite unaware that he is watched, and reads, as he thinks, in solitude, near his window, and so it is one of the most unaffected of all portraits. I ought to add that the perfection of the technical work can only be appreciated by consulting a fine impression. The copper began to wear early and is now worthless for printing, however interesting as a relic or a curiosity.

Jan Six, afterwards Burgomaster, was already, when portrayed by Rembrandt, the author of a tragedy which gives its title to an etching of the following year, *Medea, or the Marriage of Jason and Creusa* (B. 112. M. 286.). It is rather a large plate but not otherwise worth especial notice. The year 1648 also gives us the most important of all the artist's beggar subjects, *Three Beggars at the Door of a House* (B. 176. M. 287.), a brilliant etching, in which the search for full tone is entirely abandoned, as there is no indication of local colour in the beggars, and it is suggested only in the dress of the almsgiver in his doorway. This plate is very nearly related to *The Rat Killer* (B. 121. M. 261.) which is almost the same composition and has the same absence of local colour. There is some relationship too between *The Three Beggars* and *The Three Oriental Figures* (B. 118. M. 212.) who are also at the door of a house. Judging by the sales of the Amand-Durand reproductions, the etching of the Beggars comes third in modern popularity amongst all the works of Rembrandt. A minor etching of the same year, *A Jew's Synagogue* (B. 126. M. 288.), remarkably full of human character and artistic effect, is executed precisely on the same principles. One of the numerous St. Jerome subjects also belongs to this year, that is *St. Jerome writing, seated near a Large Tree* (B. 103. M. 223.). Practical students will notice that Rembrandt first etched his subject, and then, not being satisfied, made some hurried and vigorous additions in pure dry point which do not at all harmonise with the rest. This etching is a good specimen of the mighty master's autograph, but the tree is so predominant that St. Jerome is little more than a landscape figurine. The most inter-

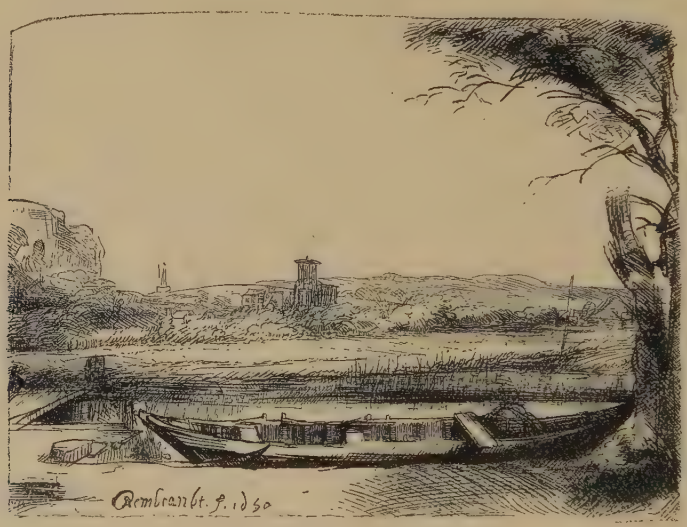
esting plate of 1648 is a very fine and very serious portrait of the artist himself, *Rembrandt Drawing* (B. 22. M. 160.). The days are now gone by when he dressed up for his own amusement and drew himself as a study of costume. He has gone through sorrow, but what a firm, strong, resolute face it is! And he needs all his strength to face the evil that lies before him.

There is no dated etching for the year 1649. A small sketch on copper, *The Bull* (B. 253. M. 289.), was dated by Rembrandt, but the last figure is lost. Mr. Middleton supplies its place with a 9, Vosmaer with a 0, Dutuit avows his inability to make a guess. In reality it is quite impossible to fix dates from Rembrandt's ever-varying styles.

It would be very interesting to know the exact date of the famous "Hundred Guilder Print." Mr. Middleton assumes it to be 1649, Vosmaer places it more vaguely at some date "about 1650," so does Mr. Haden. M. Michel gives "about 1649." I myself venture no further than to say, from technical evidence in the use of line and shade, that the plate belongs to Rembrandt's ripe maturity.

Our certain dates for 1650 continue to illustrate the extreme variety of Rembrandt's methods of work and the range of his interest in things. One day he sketches, in his roughest and most rapid manner, *Jesus Christ in the Midst of his Disciples* (B. 89. M. 225.) and the next he sets himself to imitate, with the utmost patience, a beautiful sea-shell of a pattern presenting dark irregular reticulations. *The Shell, or Damier* (B. 159. M. 290.). This is sometimes also called *The Spotted Shell*, but inaccurately, as the pattern is a sort of dark network upon a light ground. The plate is of the greatest interest as Rembrandt's most decided attempt at pure and simple imitation, the model being chosen for its imitable character, and it is curious to see the great artist humbly giving himself this elementary lesson at the mature age of forty-three. At the same time he continues his practical studies of landscape and picturesque buildings, for example, in *The Three Cottages* (B. 217. M. 325.) and *A Village with a Square Tower* (B. 218. M. 321.). He also likes variety in the use of his tools, sometimes using etched, that is bitten, lines, and sometimes the dry point. Some of the etchings and sketches appear to afford evidence of travel. For example, there is a little landscape, otherwise unimportant, *Landscape with a Canal and Swans* (B. 235. M. 322.),

which according to Vosmaer resembles the hilly scenery about Cassel, and the same authority saw in some picture or study a resemblance to the scenery of Oldenbourg. In another small etching of the year 1650, *Landscape with a Canal and Large Boat* (B. 236. M. 323.), the distance, though not mountainous, shows hills for which the artist must have wandered beyond the perfectly flat landscape of Holland. As to Rembrandt's studies in landscape, Vosmaer observes that although he began them early, his imagination did not take its flight until 1640 and reached the sublime about ten years later. However, he was always



Landscape with a Canal and Large Boat. B. 236. M. 323.

changing, and in 1651 we find him making an important landscape etching, *The Goldweigher's Field* (B. 234. M. 326), which has every appearance of simple topography, the plain portraiture of a familiar place. So, in the human figure he makes, in the same year, a most prosaic little study of ugly nudities, *The Bathers* (B. 195. M. 292.), and one of his most touching Biblical illustrations, *Tobit Blind, with the Dog* (B. 42. M. 226.), a work in which the mental conception, which is most pathetic, is everything, and the manual performance so simple, so devoid of all pretension, that it requires some knowledge of etching to recognise the strength of a master. I much prefer the *Tobit Blind*, even as a piece

of etching, to the black *Flight into Egypt: a Night Effect* (B. 53. M. 227.) which was etched in the same year. There is a strong resemblance, as to execution, between the *Tobit* and the dress of *Clement de Jonghe* (B. 272. M. 164.) also belonging to 1651, but the face of de Jonghe is carried much further and the quiet reflected light in the shadow

Tobit Blind, with the Dog. B. 42. M. 226.

of the hat is one of the best proofs of Rembrandt's complete mastery at this time.

The year 1652 offers rather a repetition of former successes than triumphs in any new variety of the art. The reader will understand that it was becoming rather difficult for Rembrandt, at the age of forty-five, and after at least twenty-four years of practice, to produce anything that

was not visibly rooted in his own past. The *Jesus Disputing with the Doctors; the Larger Plate* (B. 65. M. 231.) is a masterly sketch like the *Tobit*, in which the imaginative conception of the scene far predominates over the simple handicraft. The *David on his Knees* (B. 41. M. 232.) has more "colour" but is near akin to the Tobit in pathetic intensity of sentiment. The reader may profitably compare it with official pictures of great personages going through prayer as a public function. King David is rather rudely drawn, and I will not undertake to defend

Jesus Disputing with the Doctors; the Larger Plate. B. 65. M. 231.

the shading of his face, but he is thinking neither of crown nor harp, his whole soul is with the God of Israel. A landscape with this year's date is accurately called in the French catalogues, *Le Bouquet de Bois* (Charles Blanc, 323, Dutuit 219), by Mr. Haden, *A Landscape with a Vista*, whilst Mr. Middleton calls it *The Vista* (B. 222. M. 328.). The Italian word means either a prospect or an opening which gives the eye an escape into the distance (in French *une échappée*) and it is in this latter sense that the word is used in the English catalogues.[1] The objection to

[1] The plate might be called in English *A Clump of Trees with an Opening to the Right.* If that is too long (it is not longer than many of the titles used for other etchings), *A*

Mr. Middleton's title is that the use of the Italian word by itself conveys the notion of a wider prospect, or of a landscape in which the distance is the chief thing.[1] Here, the etching is blocked by a clump of trees with an issue round the corner to the right. It is one of Rembrandt's finest works in pure dry point. There is not a dry point in existence, by any master, that shows a more comprehensive and magisterial style.

David on his Knees. B. 41. M. 232.

VIII

The date 1653 is of sinister importance in the life of Rembrandt. He then began to borrow money in large sums. On the twenty-ninth of January he gets a loan of 4,180 florins from Cornelis Witsen, to be paid in a year. On the fourteenth of March, in the same year, he goes to Isaak van Hertsbeeck for 4,200 florins and also promises to pay in twelve months. He is now rushing quickly down the slope, the end of which is ruin. As in most instances of a like nature several different causes were operating together against him. They will be enumerated later.

There is only one etching certainly of this year but it is of capital size and importance, *Christ Crucified between Two Thieves; otherwise known as The Three Crosses* (B. 78. M. 235.). This magnificent

Wood Side would distinguish the work sufficiently and be more descriptive than *The Vista*, which one has to seek for.

[1] An excellent example of a vista in the sense of *une échappée*, may be seen in *The Flight into Egypt, called* '*In the Style of Elzheimer*,' (*B.* 56. *M.* 236), where everything leads the eye to a lovely distance in an opening between the richest and densest masses of foliage, not a sneaking outlet on one side, like a servants' gate in a garden.

etching is in Rembrandt's broad and rapid manner, it is a linear sketch with masses of shading, the whole being far too quickly executed for any accuracy of form. We must take the work synthetically, as a whole, and not apply any detailed criticism. Rembrandt's sense of the grandeur of Christ has led him to give an exaggerated height to the body on the cross which, if we judge by the foreground figures, must at its own distance measure twelve or fourteen feet. The lighting is both supernatural and unnatural, but extremely effective. Our sense of its wonder and sublimity is perhaps diminished by our familiarity with the electric light, which gives similar effects of intense fan-shaped illumination whilst leaving outside things in darkness.

The Descent from the Cross: a Night Piece (B. 83. M. 242.) is called in the French catalogues the "Descent by Torchlight" which distinguishes it better from the great *Descent from the Cross*, where the lighting is supernatural. Both in conception and execution this is one of the most vigorous etchings of 1654. Its technical principles are the same as those of *The Three Crosses*, that is, organic lines with shade thrown over them, and with massive shade elsewhere in the plate. The idea is not so like that of a picturesque sculptor as the lofty group of the great *Descent from the Cross*, and this seems preferable in an etching.

The Flight into Egypt is one of Rembrandt's favourite subjects, and he treated it in the most various ways, at one time placing the Holy Family in a magnificent landscape, more Italian than Oriental, and at others in viewless nooks. *The Flight into Egypt, the Holy Family crossing a Rill* (B. 55. M. 240.) is of no particular locality, but we may suppose that the fugitive travellers have not yet escaped from Palestine and are crossing one of its brooks. This is one of the best of Rembrandt's small sketch plates in which an entire subject is indicated with little labour both in form and light and shade. The technical work, with a less display of power, is the same as that of the last plate we have been considering. The date is 1654. An excellent sketch plate of the same year, but in which line is somewhat more important and shade less, is *Jesus and his Parents returning from Jerusalem* (B. 60. M. 244.). The attitudes are most natural, the grandeur of the scenery seems to confirm the belief that Rembrandt must have travelled out of

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS: A NIGHT PIECE.
B. 83. *M.* 242.

Holland. Another of his favourite subjects was *Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus* (B. 87. M. 237.) of which we have a new version in 1654. It is a slight and rapid sketch, finely composed, but open to the obvious objection that if the disciples had prepared a stately seat under a canopy for their Master they must have known beforehand who He was, whereas St. Luke says He was revealed to them only after breaking bread. The nimbus is more defensible, for it may be explained as a sudden effulgence that astonishes even the innkeeper (or cook) who is descending

The Flight into Egypt, the Holy Family crossing a Rill. B. 55. M. 240.

the stairs. A still more striking interpretation of the same subject is a drawing by Rembrandt of which the reader will find an effective etching in Blanc's catalogue. The figure of the Master is entirely absent from this composition; we see only the empty chair from which he has just vanished.

Jesus Disputing with the Doctors is one of the most interesting subjects for pictorial treatment in the New Testament, and we find Rembrandt recurring to it again in 1654 in a small plate (B. 64. M. 245.). The attitudes, no doubt, are very natural, but I may be

excused for preferring the conception of the boy Jesus in the larger plate, and also the placing of the other figures which seems to me more artistic.

IX

The close of the year 1654 is marked by another step on the downward path, for in the month of December Rembrandt appears before the sheriffs because he owes interest amounting to more than fifty-two florins

Jesus and his Parents returning from Jerusalem. B. 60. M. 244.

on account of 1168 florins borrowed on mortgage, the security being his house in the Breedstraat. A portrait etched in 1655 has an interest connected with Rembrandt's affairs. It is that of *Thomas Jacobsz Haring* (B. 275. M. 169.) of whom, as a man of business, we shall hear more presently. The portrait is of a grave character, which is enhanced by a rich dark background resembling that of Jan Six, but of a coarser texture. Like the Six, it is obviously a study in darks. *Abraham's Sacrifice* (B. 35. M. 246.) is technically in the manner of *The Three Crosses* and *The Descent from the Cross by Torchlight*, and by its grandeur and originality of invention and composition may well take rank as one

of Rembrandt's finest plates. *Christ before Pilate* (B. 76. M, 248.), which is more descriptively named in the French catalogues as *Jésus*

Christ ana the Disciples at Emmaus. B. 87. *M.* 237.

Christ présenté au Peuple, is a very large plate, boldly sketched, representing a court in Pilate's palace where he shows Jesus to the people

on a raised platform. There is some very grand and powerful linear sketching in this plate, having the characteristics of the etched line in all

Abraham's Sacrifice. *B.* 35. *M.* 246.

its strength, but it seems certain that Rembrandt intended to shade a good deal over it, a process already begun in the building to the left.

X

In 1656 Rembrandt's affairs were in such a bad position that he transferred his house and land to his son Titus, then a minor of fifteen. However, with the consent of Saskia's relations, he is still to have charge of the property.

This was in the month of May, but the arrangement left the unfortunate artist little respite, for he was declared insolvent in July, all his possessions seized, and an inventory made of them by order of the Court of Bankruptcy.

These miseries do not prevent Rembrandt from etching one of his finest portraits, that of *Johannes Lutma* (B. 276. M. 171.), a most powerful and characteristic study, both of face and figure. The reader ought to see a fine impression of the *first* state.

Abraham entertaining Angels (B. 29. M. 250.) is in some respects an unfortunate attempt. The manual execution, for a sketch on copper, leaves nothing to be desired, but the conception of the scene is too matter-of-fact. For God and the Angels Rembrandt has given us simply Dutch burghers enjoying themselves at table, in a garden. It was Wilson who first observed that the old man with the wine-glass is not Abraham but God the Father, or according to some theologians, God the Son. The patriarch himself is humbly serving his guests and sits to the right, holding a ewer.

There is just one plate for 1657, *St. Francis Praying* (B. 107. M. 252.), of considerable importance as to size and of great technical interest. M. Dutuit decidedly calls it one of Rembrandt's best works, and praises, as admirable, the patches of bur raised by the dry point. I see, of course, much manual power in this performance, and the figure of the saint expresses devotion well, but the plate is technically all out of tune. This may perhaps be attributed to the terrible trial through which Rembrandt was now passing.

XI

Thomas Jacobsz Haring, whose portrait Rembrandt had etched and whose grave face will thus be known to future generations so long as human beings continue to take any interest in the fine arts, was appointed by the Commissioners in bankruptcy to sell Rembrandt's goods. This first sale, however, which took place towards the end of 1657, did not include more than a part of the prints and drawings in the artist's collection. These were sold in September, 1658, at the same place, the Imperial Crown Hotel, kept by one Schuurman, who little knew the future value of what his house then temporarily contained. In February of the same year Rembrandt's mansion had been sold for 11,218 florins, its indescribably precious contents fetching about 5,000 florins, sums that went to his creditors and to the trustees of the interests of Titus, as his mother's heir, Rembrandt himself being left absolutely penniless at the age of fifty-one and severed from all the treasures of art in which he had taken delight.

Little remains to be said about the dated etchings. In 1658 the great etcher recurs to the interesting subject of *Jesus and the Samaritan Woman* (B. 70. M. 253.), a pleasant, harmonious plate with a distance reminding us (not in execution) of Dürer. There are also several studies of the nude, of no beauty, except a little perhaps in the recumbent figure of *A Negress lying on a Couch* (B. 205. M. 300.). In 1659 we have *Antiope and Jupiter* (B. 203. M. 301.), a composition that seems inspired by an Italian influence, probably that of Titian, whose genius the subject would have suited better. Even Rembrandt's etching is not without a suggestion of beauty distantly imagined, yet unattained. In the year 1661 he etched *The Woman with an Arrow* (B. 202. M. 302.), a naked figure seated on the edge of a bed, holding an arrow in her right hand, and turning her back to the spectator. This is one of those examples in which a work tells powerfully and effectively as a whole though it may be criticised in some part, even in a principal part. One might say, with truth, that the figure is still very inferior to the best Italian or even French drawing, yet the plate, as a whole, is fine because the figure is made to harmonise so perfectly with its well-invented surroundings.

It is impossible to prove that Rembrandt etched anything after this, but he did not die till October 1669.

His son Titus had died thirteen months before him at the age of twenty-six, leaving a posthumous daughter, Titia. Her mother died less than three weeks after Rembrandt.

Vosmaer thought he had found satisfactory evidence that Rembrandt lived comfortably in his latter years, and in a good house on the Rozengracht, or Canal of Roses, which he says was not at all a poor quarter, only a little out of the way.[1] The ingenious Dutch biographer of Rembrandt also founds what appears to be a powerful argument on the merry looks of *The Laughing Portrait*, a picture that formerly belonged to M. Léopold Double, who kindly lent it to us for the

[1] The passage in Vosmaer's biography is so interesting that the reader may thank me for translating it.

"One day I went hunting about the Rozengracht to see if there were no traces of Rembrandt's last dwelling, no longer known. In front of what was formerly the site of the old *Doolhof*, on the north side, I noticed two fronts in an old style with shields dated 1652. Now, it was about 1656 that Rembrandt went to live on this quay. On the ground-floor of one of these houses is the studio of M. Stracke, a sculptor. As soon as I entered and looked about me I was struck by a resemblance. Rembrandt had made a sketch of an entrance, probably in his own house. Through the doorway the drawing shows an entrance with two windows and an open door, and through these the foliage of a tree, a quay, and the fronts of houses across the canal. I found myself in the same place! M. Stracke had the kindness to show me the whole house, and its present state made the past intelligible. The wooden floor that separated the cellars from the ground-floor is gone, but the brackets are still visible on which rested the ends of the beams. There are two rooms on the first floor; that which looks out upon the quay once had a beautiful chimney-piece, and the walls are still covered with painted tiles, but they are now hidden under a modern wall-paper. Another room that may very well have served as a studio, is behind, and has three windows with a northern aspect. The owner told the present tenant that the building was formerly so rich in marbles that the value of them was equal to the price given for the whole house, even a pathway leading to some out-buildings was paved with marble, and still at the present day the kitchen floor is in marble from the quarries of Carrara!

"There is a drawing in the British Museum which was evidently made from the room with three windows in this house of the Rozengracht: it represents a studio, the three windows have small panes and look out upon a roof; on a table before one of the windows is an object that may be a board or a portfolio.

"It is evident that in Rembrandt's time the house cannot have had the aspect of a poor place of refuge, where he had gone to live in destitution." Vosmaer's "*Rembrandt, sa Vie et ses Œuvres.*" Chap. XXXIX.

Portfolio. The reader will find the etching from it by Flameng in the *Portfolio* for January 1872. So far as we are able to ascertain, this is the last piece of self-portraiture that Rembrandt ever made, and the last we see of his honest face is jocund as the spring! Let us keep this cheering impression of the hard-working artist, the uncomplaining, practical philosopher!

Rembrandt was laid in his grave on the 8th of October 1669, at the age of sixty-two, having laboured incessantly at his vocation, as pupil, or master, about forty-nine years.

PART II

THE GENIUS AND CULTURE OF THE MASTER.

I

An Old Man with a Short Straight Beard. B. 306. M. 120.

THOUGH Rembrandt is a predecessor very difficult to approach in his own lines of work, it does not seem that his nature is hard to understand. It was a sound and simple nature with straightforward impulses and strong gifts. Amongst the supreme artists of the world no one had the graphic instinct and endowment more peculiarly and exclusively. Michael Angelo could turn aside from his painting and drawing to carve a statue or build a cathedral; Raphael, besides being painter and decorator, had the sense of construction so well developed as to be a competent, practical architect in the style of the Renaissance; Leonardo da Vinci was constructive, both as architect and engineer, besides having the acumen of a discoverer in science; Rubens had brilliant social and linguistic gifts, but Rembrandt was turned aside from his graphic occupations by none of these talents or tastes. He was, indeed, a lover of variety, he liked to refresh his intellect by change, but he found such variety as he needed in the graphic arts themselves, without seeking it outside of them. Though essentially a painter in oil colours, he was also a draughtsman in the most various materials, and he treated etching in such different ways as to divide it into five or six different arts.

Rembrandt was not entirely without literary instruction. He was sent, according to Orlers, to a Latin school with the intention of

preparing him for the classical Academy of Leyden, "so that by his acquirements he might in due time serve the city and the Republic." We know from the same authority that Harmen's little son disliked his Latin studies, and may safely infer that his success in them was small. Still, the effect of this early schooling was not entirely negative, as in after life Rembrandt wrote letters in his own language of which Vosmaer gives a few in his biography, adding the remark that "any one at all versed in the epistolary style of that age in Holland, will see that these letters come from a cultivated man."

It is possible to have a sense of culture without much scholarly attainment, and the truest description of Rembrandt is to say that he was educated but not learned. He possessed a certain number of volumes, of which those specially mentioned in the inventory of his effects (when he became insolvent) are, with the exception of an old Bible, either books entirely made up of drawings or engravings or else, like his Josephus, illustrated. "Fifteen volumes of various sizes" are mentioned without separate designation, and it has been assumed that they were books to read, but some of them may have been purchased, like the rest, for their engravings. All this amounts to conclusive evidence that Rembrandt had not a scholarly or a literary turn of mind, for he lived in what was then, as it is still, an eminently learned little country. The evidence seems all the more convincing when we reflect that Rembrandt was an extravagant man and that he had the peculiar form of extravagance which does not consist in ostentation in style of living but in purchasing what one desires to possess. Such a man, if he had cared for books, would have collected a magnificent library. If, however, any reader feels inclined to accuse Rembrandt of Philistinism, let me say in his defence that he was not more Philistine with regard to literature than most people in our educated classes are with regard to art. If he bought only fifteen books, have we not many gentlemen and scholars who have *not* bought fifteen portfolios of original etchings or engravings? The essence of Philistinism lies in insensibility to the influences of genius and in unawakened observation. On these two points the evidence in Rembrandt's favour is overwhelming. His collections prove conclusively that he delighted in the works of other artists, for which he competed enthusiastically and beyond all prudence

in the auction-room, whilst as to the observation of nature, his own works are still with us to testify like a multitude of living witnesses.

Rembrandt is the representative of the graphic intellect which notices, imitates, and remembers the forms of things, yet does not stop at the form but perceives that all shapes are significant. The scholarly intellect substitutes words for things and proper names for personalities, after which it deals with these substitutes as financiers deal with figures. The graphic intellect has its own processes of substitution of which Rembrandt's etchings afford many curious and interesting examples, but the visible forms of nature, though often noted in a sketcher's shorthand, are never lost sight of or forgotten.

"In the mind of such a man," said the elder Leslie, "the immense amount of knowledge accumulated by close and silent observation, knowledge of a kind not to be communicated by words, is something wholly inconceivable to the learned merely in books; and if their reading has opened to them a world from which he is shut out, he also lives in a world of his own, equally interesting, the wisdom and enjoyment of which his pencil is constantly employed in communicating to all who have eyes for the sublime aspects of nature, and hearts fitted to receive such impressions through their eyes."

I believe that Rembrandt was as safely guided by his instincts in his abstinence from certain pursuits as in the zealous industry with which he addicted himself to others. The dictionary tells us that "the humanities," in the plural, are "the branches of polite or elegant learning, as language, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and the study of the ancient classics." But surely if any works in the world belong essentially to the "humanities" they are the works of Rembrandt himself, for no one has ever shown a profounder or a more catholic interest in man. Both the limits of this essay, and its special subject, forbid me to range at will over all the fields of Rembrandt's art, but in the one field that is open to me I find ample proof of the most catholic human sympathies, and it may be for this reason that whilst we admire the skill or culture of some artists (as, for example, the stern self-discipline of Ingres imposes itself on our respect) we do not admire Rembrandt merely, but it seems to us that we have known him personally and that we keep the memory of him fresh and green in our affections. Let us remember, too, that his interest in humanity was

unfeigned, that it did not express itself merely in pictures that he might hope to sell, but in hundreds of memoranda done evidently for himself and out of pure love of his subjects and pleasure in the constant practice of his art. Even the etchings, which might legitimately have been a source of income, were unprofitable in the artist's life-time. The famous *Hundred Guilder Print* is not believed to have brought Rembrandt that number of coined guilders, he only exchanged a proof of it for some engravings by Marcantonio which the dealer who offered them chose to value at that sum. Vosmaer says that the time and trouble he gave to

A Sheet of Sketches, afterwards divided into Five. B. 366. M. 83.

his etched portraits were certainly not remunerated. We cannot affirm that more than two of the etchings were sold by the trade, the others were kept for presents or exchanges, or disposed of occasionally by the artist.

It is clear, I think, from the etchings themselves that they cannot have been in any sense a mercantile speculation, with the exception of a very few plates, principally of large dimensions. The great majority are simply an artist's expression of his own mind, many are simply memoranda, like *A Sheet of Sketches, afterwards divided into Five* (B. 366. M. 83.), all may be taken as faithful reflections, during at least thirty-

three years, of Rembrandt's varying interests in human life, in landscape, and in the technical resources of etching itself. I propose to consider life and landscape in this Part and to reserve technical matters for the next.

II

The very earliest stage of human existence is generally more attractive to the feminine than to the masculine mind. It was not entirely neglected by Rembrandt, but he does not appear to have taken any very lively interest in infancy by itself, the charm of it, to him, was in its dependence upon parental love. If the reader is able to refer to a plate called *Academical Figures of Two Men* (B. 194. M. 280.) he will see in the background a slight and pale sketch of an entirely different subject, a child in a go-cart encouraged by an old woman. This little scene of infantine life is charmingly imagined, but Rembrandt valued it so little that he used the same plate for a commonplace study of the nude. Other works[1] prove that Rembrandt was not indifferent to babies, but it was the affection of parents that interested him most, an affection touchingly expressed in the attitude of the Virgin in *The Holy Family with the Serpent* (B. 63. M. 241.) where she is bending over the child so lovingly and laying her cheek to his. So in *Abraham caressing Isaac* (B. 33. M. 203.) the patriarch caresses the boy's face very tenderly and the boy is happy to be there between the paternal knees. Rembrandt had himself lost children in their infancy and could sympathise with all parental feeling, as when he etched *Jacob lamenting the supposed Death of Joseph* (B. 38. M. 189.) and the affecting plate of *The Virgin mourning the Death of Jesus* (B. 85. M. 202.).

The peasant children in Rembrandt's etchings are far from being attractive little creatures, and it is probably not a loss that we are unable to see those in the dark plate of *The Schoolmaster*. Nor is the child in

[1] There is a delightful little sketch of a sleeping child in the possession of Sir Frederick Leighton, reproduced in M. Michel's book on Rembrandt, and the reader will find in the same volume a family picture from the Brunswick Gallery, in which are three little children that appear both graceful and good-tempered. A very touching sketch, anticipating a well-known English picture, represents a widower gently trying to feed his baby, that appears to be unresponsive.

the *Three Peasants Travelling* (B. 131. M. 153.) a promising specimen of his race. It cannot be said that the etchings prove any delight in the beauty of young children. Even when we follow the models to maturity we do not often meet with any grace or elegance, quite a rare and exceptional instance being the figure of the young man in *Youth Surprised by Death*. The etchings in which Rembrandt attempted to represent the naked figure at its best time, for example the *Academical Figures of Two Men* (B. 194. M. 280.), are the most matter-of-fact interpretations without any sensitiveness to the beauty of the body or any evidence of the instinct which disengages a latent elegance that nature obscurely suggests. Closely connected with this indifference to the corporal beauty of youth, is the inability to conceive or express voluptuousness, of which there is never any trace in the works of Rembrandt. I am aware, of course, that three or four of his etchings represent certain actions that belong to the animal nature of man, but they are completely severed from everything that is seductive or poetical in form or motion. The plastic and graphic arts have often, like poetry, made it their business to idealise physical passion, and this may be done successfully by associating it with beauty of form and tenderness of sentiment.[1] There is nothing of this refinement in Rembrandt. He cannot approach a certain side of

Three Peasants Travelling. B. 131. *M.* 153.

[1] The classical painter, David, a most severely-disciplined artist, once painted Cupid and Psyche so as to tell all that painting ought to tell of youth, and beauty, and love, and he did it with an art so delicate that it is impossible to reprove him. Shelley had the same delicacy, as for example in his Epithalamium and in his little Italian poem containing the stanza :—

"Solinga, scura, cupa, senza speme,
La notte quando Lilla m'abbandona :
Pei cuori che si batton insieme
Ogni notte, senza dirla, sarà buona."

nature without grossness and therefore keeps habitually away from it as if warned by a consciousness of deficiency. There are, indeed, two deficiencies in Rembrandt with regard to this, his lack of ideality and the insufficiency of his classical culture.

It might be argued that Rembrandt drew the body with the same veracity as the hands and face, and that our criticism betrays a want of consistency in ourselves, since we approve of truth in the representation of the features and object to it in the trunk or limbs. Certainly Rembrandt never palliated plainness, he described even the ugliness of his own nose (B. 4. M. 42.), but whenever the human face is in question there may always be a ready and ample compensation for the lack of beauty in the presence of intellect and character, or, if these are wanting, in pathos. It is a sign of gentle feeling in a young man to take a respectful interest in age. Rembrandt began early in life to write on copper his own immortal treatise *de Senectute*. His strength lay in his respect for the wisdom of maturity and the dignity of declining years. His best portraits always represent either grave and learned men like Ephraim Bonus and Cornelius Sylvius, or old men like *Jacob Haring* (B. 274. M. 168.), one of his finest works. No author ever described more gently than Rembrandt has done in that portrait the slow approaches of senility. Some of the most interesting heads of old men are without names, and all we know is that they once existed. Rembrandt seems to have taken an interest in them for the most various reasons. Their hair and beards, if luxuriant, were delightful to etch, but baldness interested the artist also, and we find several studies of bald men, like this one called a *Profile of a Bald Man with a Jewelled Chain* (B. 292. M. 39.).[1] He amused himself by noting the various stages and degrees

Profile of a Bald Man with a Jewelled Chain. B. 292. M. 39.

[1] It is the first state that shows the chain of the order, the second state is altered, and the third shows heavy additional work, which M. Dutuit supposes to have been added by another hand.

of baldness, for example, it is incipient in the little etching called by M. Dutuit *Tête à demi chauve*[1] (B. 296. M. 95.), whilst it is lamentably complete in another little etching, *Bust of a Bald Man, leaning forward to the Right with his Mouth open* (B. 298. M. 56.). We know from many pictures and etchings that Rembrandt fully appreciated a fine beard, yet he could turn aside to note the poverty of a thin stubbly one as well as cranial nudity in *An Old Man with a Short Straight Beard; a Profile to the Right* (B. 306. M. 120.), reproduced on p. 59.

Amongst all Rembrandt's numerous studies of old age, I know of none more observantly truthful than the delightful little etching of *An Old Woman Sleeping* (B. 350. M. 116.). This seems to have been long a popular plate, as it has been often copied, once by Andrew Geddes. I do not know any work by the master that contains so much of his human sympathy and such abundant evidence of observation on so small a scale. The old lady, comfortably as well as picturesquely clothed, has been reading her Bible and has been surprised by a sudden need of sleep, her head resting on one hand, the spectacles, no longer wanted, on the other. As a study, the little etching could not have been carried further. It reminds me of Leslie's opinion that "the prevalent tone of Rembrandt's mind, as shown in his art, is serenity. Where the subject allows him, his natural disposition seems always tranquil, and though serious, yet the very reverse of gloomy. He is the painter of repose, as Rubens is the painter of action." Rembrandt sometimes attempted violent action, as in the three rapidly executed sketch plates of lion hunts,[2] and it seemed to be a usual coincidence in his sketching

An Old Woman Sleeping. B. 350. M. 116.

[1] I give a French title for once, as it is much more accurate than Mr. Middleton's, "Head of a Bald Old Man, inclined to the Left." The man is not old, his hair is still dark, and he is scarcely bald, as it is only thinning at the top.

[2] The large one (B. 114. M. 272.) has been already mentioned. The two smaller ones are etched in the same violently vigorous style for composition and action only, form

that when the subject was connected with energetic action the handling was bold, quick, and decided, concerning itself as little about a multitude of minor truths as a war-horse thinks of the field-mice beneath its feet. The reader may accept *A Battle Piece* (B. 117. M. 275.) as an expression of a temper which sometimes, but rarely, manifested itself in the works of Rembrandt. What he felt to be most in harmony with his own nature was quiet thought or peaceful and deliberate occupation. I

A Battle Piece. B. 117. *M.* 275.

should say, for instance, that the beautiful, lightly sketched *Old Man resting his Hands upon a Book* (B. 147. M. 156.) well represents the quiet thought, whilst the *Student in his Chamber* (B. 148. M. 276.) and *St Jerome; in Rembrandt's dark manner* (B. 105. M. 214.) represent the solitary work or study which the artist, though not himself a bookish man, could still appreciate and understand.

being of necessity sacrificed, as the shapes of letters are in the swiftest writing (B. 115. M. 273.) (B. 116. M 274.).

III

Some artists have an aristocratic turn by nature, as Rubens, Vandyke, Reynolds; others are naturally plebeian like Ostade, as in literature we have our genteel novelists who always introduce us to gentlefolks, and our plebeian or middle-class novelists who pride themselves on an intimate knowledge of the people. If it were asked to which category Rembrandt belonged, the right answer would be that he was too great to be either enviously hostile to the wealthy or contemptuous towards the poor. One of the imputations currently received against him was a taste for low society; the class he habitually lived in was that which follows the learned or the artistic professions; most of his friends were doctors, lawyers, clergymen, or painters and etchers like himself. He was not a tuft-hunter; he did not run after great folks. Having work enough in his art he sought only recreation in society, and expressed his taste in words that have become immortal. "Als ik mijn geest uitspanninge wil geven, dan is het niet eer die ik zoek, maar vrijheid." "When I wish to give rest to my mind, it is not honours that I seek, but liberty." A life divided between hard work and perfect ease left no room for that mysterious art of social advancement which has been for many a painter the secret of success.

IV

If Rembrandt was neither aristocratic nor democratic, ought we to say that he was religious? No one can deny that he was a most successful illustrator of the Old and New Testaments, not to mention the Apocrypha. Here he is a strong competitor with Raphael and Michael Angelo, though on principles the opposite of theirs. Whilst they endeavoured to idealise prophets and apostles, and to rise even to the representation of Divinity, Rembrandt had a clear vision of all religious personages as human beings. One of his compositions is called the "Ecce Homo." In a certain sense the title is applicable to them all. Even God the Father, in *Abraham entertaining the Angels*, is represented

as an amiable human friend who appreciates a glass of wine. Christ, in the Hundred Guilder and many another print, is the Son of Man who sympathises with suffering in others or endures it patiently himself. When Christ is preaching, as in the etching known as *La Tombe* (B. 67. M. 229.), Rembrandt no more despises the humble listeners than did

Christ's Body carried to the Tomb. B. 84. M. 217.

the Teacher who addressed them. When the voice is silenced, a pathetic little group bears the body, tortured no longer, to its quiet resting-place. This scene is represented in a little etching, *Christ's Body carried to the Tomb* (B. 84. M. 217.), in which the simple-hearted, affectionate followers are unconscious that theirs is the grandest funeral procession of all time.

V

In judging Rembrandt as a etcher of landscape we ought to bear in mind two considerations, first, that landscape was quite a secondary pursuit for him; and, next, that he was situated in a country where the grander manifestations of natural glory in landscape are unknown. It is supposed that he may have visited some hilly, but not mountainous, district in Germany, and it has been affirmed, on very insufficient evidence, that he knew the neighbourhood of Hull. However this may be, Rembrandt had not a tithe of the landscape experience of Titian, nor a hundredth part of the opportunities of Turner. He knew nothing of Scotland, France, Switzerland, or Italy. He was deprived of at least half the materials accessible to him by his complete indifference to, and corresponding ignorance of, the sea. Neither had he Claude's exquisite sense of the richness of inland landscape. Add to this the peculiar limitations of the art of etching which are not favourable to those delicate distinctions of tone on which all the most impressive effects of distant landscape must depend. The consequences are, first, confinement to simple and homely subjects, and, secondly, great simplicity in the treatment of those subjects.

And yet, notwithstanding these limitations, we all look upon Rembrandt as a master, even of landscape. The reason for this may be expressed in a single phrase, his powerful expression of character. If he does not attempt to imitate the exact forms of a scene, or the tones of an effect, he shows you the nature of the place at the first glance and makes you feel as if you were there. No delineation of landscape was ever more penetrating or more comprehensive. Take, for instance, the *Landscape with a Ruined Tower and a Clear Foreground* (B. 223. M. 317.) and see how everything about the place is either explained or suggested. We have the rural village with its old church, and houses, and haystacks, and its gloomy wood, and the road that passes by. At the same time we are made to feel that it is in the open country, and an effect of stormy weather is suggested in dark distance and threatening sky, without any attempt at imitation. Nothing more, in the way of impression, could be communicated without colour. Essentially the same landscape in

principle is the one called by Mr. Middleton *An Arched Landscape with a Flock of Sheep* (B. 224. M. 319).[1]

Here, too, we have an open foreground, the chief interest of the subject, as before, being in a mass of trees and a hay barn that occupy the middle distance, leaving an outlet to the left. I recommend the student to familiarise himself with the workmanship of this plate, because so many small landscape etchings have been attributed to Rembrandt that it is well to have in the memory a good type of his landscape executed on a small scale. For the same reason I mention *A Village with a Square Tower; an Arched Plate* (B. 218. M. 321.) and the *Landscape with an Obelisk* (B. 227. M. 324). There is also a small landscape that may be easily overlooked, but which has its own importance, *An Orchard with a Barn* (B. 230. M. 316.) These plates, notwithstanding their limited dimensions, are executed in as strong and simple a style as, for example, the *Landscape with a Ruined Tower and a Clear Foreground* (B. 223. M. 317.), whereas many little plates attributed to Rembrandt are weak and rather pretty, or not pretty at all but still weak, both in conception and in style.

On looking back over the landscapes I observe the following chief characteristics. First, a strong sense of the picturesque in foreground material as in the *Village with a River and a Sailing Vessel* (B. 228. M. 314.), next, in several plates, a disposition to throw the interest into the middle distance and sacrifice the foreground (see *Landscape with Ruined Tower, &c.*); lastly, a lively sense of the charm of a remote distance, as in the lovely outlook to the left in *A Large Landscape with a Dutch Hay Barn* (B. 225. M. 306.) and other instances. It is surprising that after the magnificent note of transient effect in *The Three Trees*, where the grandeur and motion of a sky are perfectly suggested, Rembrandt should not have attempted to etch other skies, but that remains alone with the single exception of the threatening weather in the sublime plate of *The Ruined Tower*. The inference is that Rembrandt was by no means indifferent to the impressiveness of skies in nature, but

[1] The French critics entitle the same plate *La Grange à Foin* or *La Grange à Foin et le Troupeau;* Mr. Middleton's title seems to attract too much attention to the sheep which do not strike the eye at the first glance. His word "arched" helps to distinguish the plate well.

was dissatisfied with their rudely linear interpretation in etching, as he practised the art. His knowledge of water appears to have been extremely limited, a mere nothing in comparison with that attained by modern landscape-painters. Rembrandt sometimes indicated the presence of water, but that was all; he never attempted to etch a wave, his study of reflections was rudimentary, the best instance being *A Cottage with White Pales* (B. 232. M. 308.). He was strongest in picturesque buildings and next to that in trees, though his merit as an etcher of trees lies principally in his fine sense of mass, for he does not seem to have had any extensive knowledge of species. Altogether, Rembrandt was a landscape etcher of great power, because he was such a forcible artist before he approached landscape, but, though he proved this in a few superb plates, his acquaintance with nature was most limited. He has, however, exercised a great technical influence on landscape etching and through it on modern pen-drawing and landscape illustration generally. Besides, it would be unfair to judge of Rembrandt's studies in landscape from his work on copper alone, as there exist many sketches by him in other materials.

VI

Rembrandt took but little interest in animals, which occur very rarely in his etchings, and the most finished of these representations, *The Little Dog Sleeping* (B. 158. M. 267.), is probably by another hand. There is another *Sketch of a Dog* (B. 371. M. 266.) in the corner of a plate of which the rest was left vacant; it is good, and evidently authentic. For the heraldic lion in *St. Jerome Sitting at the Foot of a Tree* (B. 100. M. 190.) I do not hold Rembrandt responsible, nor for the ass in *The Flight into Egypt; a Small Spright Print* (B. 52. M. 184.). He is, however, answerable for the wild beasts in the large and lesser Lion Hunts, which have energetic motion but are poor in size and shape (compare these wild-cats with the bronzes of Barye), and for the ass in

Sketch of a Dog. B. 371. M. 266.

A Village with a River and a Sailing Vessel. B. 228. M. 314.

The Flight into Egypt; the Holy Family crossing a Rill (B. 55. M. 240.), which has the genuine asinine character and action.[1] This does not amount to evidence that Rembrandt had the love of domesticated animals that distinguished Paul Potter. Where, in the etchings, are his sheep? Where are his cattle or farm-horses, either in harness or at liberty in the fields? For an artist with Rembrandt's power of drawing, his attention to animal life seems strangely rare and languid in its interest, as it is impossible that he can have been turned aside from it by any consciousness of technical inability.

VII

The artistic personality we have been studying is one of great range and mighty energy, yet far from being universal. It is marked by a strong preference of maturity to youth and by an unfailing interest in age. Full of the most intense and pathetic human sympathy, even its religion is a "religion of humanity." It is indifferent to the division of mankind into patrician and plebeian classes, but not indifferent to the signs of culture and of thought. Its sense of beauty is picturesque rather than plastic, and attaches itself to effect rather than to form. It strongly prefers costume to nudity. It seeks refreshment and consolation in homely landscape, yet has some appreciation of grander and more romantic scenery. It pays a slight occasional attention to animals. With remarkable and rare powers of memory, invention, and manual execution, it is without any sure guidance in a cultivated taste, and remains therefore at all times liable to such errors as the *Adam and Eve* or the *Woman sitting upon a Hillock* (B. 198. M. 256.), whilst the only attempt at decorative monumental arrangement, *An Allegorical Piece* (B. 110. M. 296.), is top-heavy, straggling, and out of all reasonable proportions.

[1] I am not forgetting some studies of animals (particularly a lion and an elephant) outside of Rembrandt's etched work, to which, at present, I am obliged as much as possible to confine my attention.

PART III

TECHNICAL NOTES

I

THE reader is already aware that modern criticism does not admit the whole of the etched work formerly attributed to Rembrandt as genuine.

The result of certain inquiries has been, briefly, this, that we cannot any longer accept with blind confidence any work whatever that is attributed to Rembrandt, with signature or without signature, dated or undated.

We find ourselves, therefore, in a situation from which there is no logical issue, as we can only test the spurious plates by a comparison with the genuine ones, but, to know which *are* the genuine ones, we must have already distinguished them from the spurious, so that, in order to make the selection, we, in fact, must have already made it.

The biographical test, in Rembrandt's case, is hardly available, as there is so little documentary evidence. There was no zealous contemporary to make an accurate catalogue in the artist's life-time, as Sir Francis Drake did for the etched work of Mr. Haden. We have a few facts or traditions. There is, for example, *The Hundred Guilder Print*, which Rembrandt exchanged for some Marcantonios, but if it pleased me to affirm that the linear work only was by the hand of Rembrandt and the shading by an assistant, I might have the opinion of artists and connoisseurs against me, yet they could not effectually defend themselves. I should answer that down to a recent date all expert opinion accepted plates that we now reject, and I should quote their prices. A print of *The Descent from the Cross* has fetched £36, a

Raising of Lazarus £72, a *Good Samaritan* the same. An *Ecce Homo* has fetched £190 and a *Gold Weigher* £260, all of them prices considerably exceeding the poor £8 15*s.* which Rembrandt is said to have got for the Hundred Guilder Print (but did not). I may remind the reader that Bartsch admitted 375 plates into his Rembrandt catalogue whilst Mr. Middleton admitted only 329, and in a certain number of those admitted even by Mr. Middleton there is a great quantity of manual work that is not now believed to be by the hand of Rembrandt.

Mr. Haden and I may be asked why we did not discover the spurious plates twenty years sooner. Mr. Haden's answer is that he never admitted one of them into his private collection, or had the slightest desire to possess them; mine is that the plates selected for description in "Etching and Etchers" are all still admitted to be perfectly genuine. I well remember my feelings about the doubtful plates. I naturally trusted to the authority of the artists and connoisseurs of all nations who had accepted them, and as Rembrandt had adopted many different styles, I did not, at that time, see any reason why he should not have adopted at times what may be called an engraver's rather than an etcher's manner when it pleased him to reproduce designs already executed in some other medium. In a word I believed (and there were fairly good reasons for this belief) that Rembrandt occasionally executed for commercial purposes, what may be called industrial work in etching. It has since been suggested by Mr. Haden for reasons which to me are satisfactory and convincing, but which do not amount to positive proofs, that the industrial work formerly attributed to Rembrandt was, in reality, done for him by pupils or assistants, who, according to the practice of those days, and even the laws and regulations of their profession, were not permitted to sign their names. We are, indeed, compelled to choose between the two alternatives. Either, in certain plates, plates of which the conception and composition belonged to Rembrandt, the handicraft was done by himself purely as a matter of business, as we used to believe, or else it must have been done as a matter of business by anonymous pupils or assistants. It seems to me, now, that the latter is more likely—much more likely, considering the strong personality of Rembrandt's nature,—to be true, but our former belief is excusable for a peculiar reason. The case bears no resemblance to

ordinary cases. Rembrandt was not like a Ruysdael, a Paul Potter, a Turner, a Méryon, or a Samuel Palmer, who, each in his own way, had a settled style in etching. Rembrandt had at least half-a-dozen styles, and these did not succeed each other in any steady chronological order, but were resumed or thrown aside according to the whim of the moment. For example, in 1647, he etches the famous *Portrait of Jan Six* (B. 285. M. 159), which is the *ne plus ultra* of his finish as to tone and texture, but in the following year his style becomes linear again, as in the *St. Jerome writing, seated near a large Tree* (B. 103. M. 223.), or it combines line and shade, without any delicacy of tone or quality of darks, as in the *Marriage of Jason and Creusa* (B. 286. M. 112.). Instead of persevering in a style when he had succeeded in it, Rembrandt more frequently abandoned it for something else. It requires, then, considerable assurance in a critic to affirm of a changeable artist who works in six styles that he has not, on another occasion, tried a seventh. The most likely test is this. We know enough of Rembrandt to perceive that he must have been a highly intelligent man. If, therefore, any workmanship attributed to him is manifestly mechanical, it is probably due to some assistant. We also know that Rembrandt was immensely productive, and that he must have been a good economist of time. If, therefore, the mechanical execution had to be long and laborious (particularly in large plates) we may conclude that he would pass it on to another, unless, as in the case of the portrait of Six, there was some technical object in view which could not be attained by another hand. As for the morality of signing work not literally, as to handicraft, one's own, the old masters had no more scruples on that point in the graphic arts than our own contemporaries have in the practice of sculpture.

The questionable plates attributed to Rembrandt are not, however, confined to works of which the design is due to him whilst the manual labour was supplied by assistants. A considerable number of plates, particularly but not exclusively landscapes, formerly attributed to Rembrandt are now believed not only to have been executed by inferior hands but conceived and composed by men of inferior artistic endowments. The reader perceives how much more serious is this question than the other, as that related to handicraft alone and not to the first conception of a work of art or the interpretation of nature.

II.

The reader may perhaps be surprised to hear that the supremacy of Rembrandt in etching is not founded upon any unapproachable technical superiority. It is mental, and manual so far as it proves the possession of great executive power, but in such matters as the use of different qualities of shade, thicknesses of line, and depths of biting, the cleverest professional etchers of the present day are Rembrandt's superiors, and it is probable that if he could examine their performances he would acknowledge it. We have clear evidence that his grounds were not always well composed or skilfully applied, that the bitings were certainly often deeper and occasionally shallower than he intended them to be, and that his chemical and technical science in all ways was less advanced than our own is to-day. M. Amand-Durand, who has given a thousand proofs of the certainty of his own chemical operations, is persuaded that Rembrandt must have had what we should consider inferior resources at his disposal, that he must have been *mal outillé*. Such etchings as *Rembrandt in a Fur Cap and Dark Dress* (B. 6. M. 17.), *Rembrandt with Bushy Hair* (B. 25. M. 49.), and *Rembrandt with Bushy Hair, and strongly shaded* (B. 34. M. 43.), are good examples of involuntary face-blackening by too much acid, yet the hand that mismanaged these has given us the delightful little *Rembrandt with Moustache and small Beard* (B. 2. M. 106.), which, both for the perfectly intelligent management of the point and the precisely sufficient biting, is one of the most faultless works of art in the world.[1]

Rembrandt with Moustache and Small Beard. B. 2. M. 106.

It is probably as a result of the bad quality of an etching-ground that Rembrandt's own great plate of *The Descent from the Cross* (B. 81. M.

[1] This plate has long been known by the ridiculous and almost unintelligible title *Rembrandt aux Trois Moustaches*. Even the "small beard" is objectionable, as it conveys an inexact idea. As we use the French word *moustache*, why not use the other convenient French word, *barbiche*, or, when a mere tuft, *impériale?*

186.) was destroyed in the biting. As the labour with the needle had been enormous, the artist does not appear to have summoned courage to begin the weary task over again, so he entrusted a replica to other hands, and it is from this copy that the current edition has been printed, the spoiled plate having only yielded trial proofs enough to demonstrate its worthlessness. This failure shows the importance of good biting, as the work with the point was much more artistic in the rejected plate than in the well-bitten one that Rembrandt too carelessly allowed to go forth under his own name. Amongst minor failures from the same cause may be mentioned *The Rat Killer ; an injured Plate* (B. 122. M. 260.).

A technical merit that Rembrandt often displayed in an exceptional degree was his masterly way of combining strong and delicate work in the same plate, of which there is an excellent example in *Rembrandt's Mother, seated, looking to the Right* (B. 343. M. 54.), where the face and hands are treated in one style of execution, the dress in another, and the table-cover and background more summarily in a third. The etching-needle thus becomes like three different instruments which may be compared to musical instruments played together in concerted music. Such execution gives the pleasure of difference in unity. It strongly contrasts, for example, with the unintelligent uniformity of Van Vliet's exècution, which was excessively industrious, but only resulted in opacity.

The intentional combination of different ways of handling the point in a single plate is not to be confounded with an involuntary mixture of styles, a fault to which the inexperienced are often exposed because they have not the power of will and foresight that predetermines the exact nature of a work of art from the first stroke to the last. Nothing can prove more convincingly the vigour and sanity of Rembrandt's intellect than the decision with which the executive scheme or project of each work is settled before it is begun. Each separate etching is an enterprise in itself and may be a new experiment. The artist has all his powers and faculties under control, he is never carried beyond his first intention by the seductive detail of nature, and he is never prevented from observing nature by any fixed habit of execution. Even in his full maturity he can cast aside styles in which he has been perfectly successful, either to resume the practice of an old one or

invent a new. Yet, in each work, he remains as faithful to the style determined upon for that work as if he had never mastered any other. Such a power of self-direction is very rare in art. All the engravings of Lucas of Leyden, of Albert Dürer, of Schongauer, are in each case technically alike. The etchings of Ruysdael, of Ostade, of Paul Potter, are, in each case, executed on the same principles. All Titian's pen-drawings are technically the same, all Turner's etchings, if we do not consider the subject, are but one etching. Samuel Palmer laboriously brought one kind of etching to its own perfection. Tenniel's variety as a draughtsman is in subject, not in execution. Gerôme has a fixed and uniform style with the hard pencil point, the modern substitute for silver-point. Sir Frederick Leighton always draws in the same manner with black and white chalk on brown paper. All these artists, by fidelity to one method, reached and maintained a particular kind of skill, but Rembrandt had not this special practice in his favour.

A Jew with a High Cap.
B. 133. *M.* 140.

For the same reason, no critic who has a special doctrine about the practice of etching can appeal to Rembrandt as an authority. When Mr. Haden says that an etching ought to be executed in one sitting to preserve the freshness of the impression we are at liberty to reply that this can be done in a small linear etching when drawing is preserved but light and shade only indicated, as, for example, in the little plate of *A Jew with a High Cap* (B. 133. M. 140.), or that it can be done in a larger plate when all accuracy of drawing is abandoned as in *The Large Lion Hunt* (B. 114. M. 272.), but that all etchings by Rembrandt in which drawing and any approach to complete shading are united must of necessity have occupied several sittings and certainly did so. If, on the other hand, a critic were to maintain with Samuel Palmer that so long as labour is intelligent the value of a work of art is increased in exact proportion with the amount of toil bestowed upon it we might answer that there are many plates by Rembrandt, very slightly executed,

such, for example, as *The Bull* (B. 253. M. 289.), or the little *Resurrection of Lazarus* (B. 72. M. 215), to which nothing could have been added even by the master himself without destruction as they are already complete according to the style of execution adopted. To turn a sketch into what is called a finished drawing is to destroy the sketch and substitute

A Sketch for the Hundred Guilder Print.

another thing in its place. There is of course, no objection to finishing a thing in its own sense. We have a beautiful unfinished etching by Rembrandt, *An Old Man lifting his Hand to his Cap* (B. 259. M. 139.), in which the head, hand, and cap are carried as far as the etcher intended, the rest being indicated, apparently for future work. To complete such

an etching would be to respect the work already done and go on elsewhere in harmony with it.

There is another doctrine professed and acted upon by some modern etchers (I know one who is quite faithful to it) that all work in original etching ought to be executed directly from nature. We have reasons for believing that Rembrandt did occasionally work from nature on the copper. The story is that once at Six's country house, where Rembrandt was present at an early dinner, there was no mustard. The host sent to fetch some from the village, and Rembrandt betted that before the servant (who was a slow fellow) returned he would etch a plate. He accordingly drew on copper the subject thereby immortalised as *Six's Bridge* (B. 208. M. 313.), which was visible through the window. If this story (told by Gersaint) is true, as it well may be, it shows that Rembrandt had a prepared plate with him, ready to do a landscape directly from nature, and it is highly probable that *The Goldweigher's Field* (B. 234. M. 326.) and several other plates that might be mentioned were done in the same way, though not so rapidly.[1] On the other hand, we have good evidence that some of the most important plates were done either from complete drawings of the whole subject or from experimental sketches of their different parts. I have not space to mention all the plates belonging to one or the other of these two categories, but amongst the important and most celebrated works I may mention *The Death of the Virgin* and *Christ Healing the Sick* (the Hundred Guilder Print) as executed with the help of preparatory studies of parts, which are well known to us, whilst as to portraits we have in the British Museum the original drawing of *Cornelis Anslo*, from which the etching was made. The etching of *Joseph telling his Dreams* (B.37. M. 205.) is also an example of etching prepared for by previous work, as Rembrandt had made first a *grisaille* of the whole subject and afterwards a red chalk drawing of the figure of Jacob. Every kind of etching, even including the elaborate kind of tone-etching which has been adopted for the interpretation of pictures, may claim authority from the various and

[1] I had nearly written *not in such a hurry*, but that would have been inaccurate, as Rembrandt, with the consummate power of self-direction that we have been noticing, merely decided to adopt his most summary means of expression, and then hurried himself no more than the slow Dutchman who had gone to fetch the mustard.

versatile practice of the great master. If any one asserts that linear expression is a legitimate purpose in etching he certainly has Rembrandt on his side, but if he says that it is the only legitimate purpose of the art, then Rembrandt answers with tone plates like his *St. Jerome; in the dark manner* (B. 105. M. 214.), or he combines the most vigorous, and I may say magical, use of line with powerful and massive shading as in *The Presentation; in Rembrandt's dark manner* (B. 50. M. 243.).

III

I have still to consider the question of the spurious plates, and that of assistance given to Rembrandt by pupils or other artists in plates that were designed by him and probably more or less worked upon by his own hand. I was prepared to go into these questions fully, but limits of space and time compel me to be laconic, so that I can only give results. This can be done most quickly by a list with a few words of commentary.

The Descent from the Cross (B. 81. M. 187.). The large etching of this subject. Rembrandt himself first etched it on the same scale and with elaborate shading, all by his own hand. The etching ground, having been badly composed or ill-applied, did not resist the acid so that the plate was ruined beyond redemption in the biting. Three proofs were taken and the plate abandoned, but a second etching was made from it, a copy in which the drawing is vulgar and the shading commonplace, but the biting clear and sound. The copy is obviously not by Rembrandt himself, though made under his supervision. It is a commercial plate.

Ecce Homo (B. 77. M. 200.). Also a large commercial plate done by some assistant under Rembrandt's supervision, the etcher proceeding as a copyist (we know this from proofs of the work in progress) and guided by Rembrandt's corrections, but, of course, unable to give Rembrandt's handling in the shaded parts whilst he vulgarised his drawing. What remains of the original author is the composition, and the general arrangement of chiaroscuro.

The Raising of Lazarus (B. 73. M. 188.). Here the share of Rembrandt himself is rather more difficult to determine. Judging

from his usual habits I should say that he would never have been at the trouble to shade the arched border in this way. Several plates by Rembrandt are arched, but in a sketchy manner. If, then, an assistant was employed for the border he probably did other work besides, most likely all the heavy shading, perhaps all the figure of Christ and the figures to the left. Lazarus and the astonished spectators to the right are drawn without useless labour and display great power of expression, but if the reader will compare the manual execution with the firm, clear, and decided drawing of the faces in *The Hundred Guilder Print* he will see that these, though cleverly executed, do not display the same marvellous use of line. Mr. Haden thinks that the arrangement of the subject and the "melodramatic action" are not like Rembrandt. We know, indeed, the small *Resurrection of Lazarus* (B. 72. M. 215.), which is remarkable for the absence of stage effect. My own conclusion is that the framework and all the heavy shading are certainly not Rembrandt's handiwork, whilst Lazarus and the spectators near him are very doubtful.

The Good Samaritan (B. 90. M. 185.). A laborious commercial plate, very different from the preceding. After the sublime we come down to the pretty. What strikes me in this plate is that it belongs strictly to its own time. Its interpretation of nature and its peculiar finish are of the seventeenth century, all through, but Rembrandt's work in etching distinguishes itself from modern work by sheer superiority, not by being old-fashioned. The invention of the subject has been traced by Vosmaer to J. van de Velde. Mr. Haden attributes the execution to Ferdinand Bol.

The Mountebank or Charlatan (B. 129. M. 117.). Mr. Haden refers to Vosmaer as having attributed the design of *The Charlatan* to J. van de Velde, but Vosmaer only mentions the *Charlatan* in a list of things of a certain date and his remark did not refer to this etching but to *The Pancake Woman*.[1] This little plate is of first-rate excellence, and Rembrandt's.

[1] Vosmaer is giving a list of etchings executed at a certain time, and mentions, amongst others, "*le Charlatan, la Faiseuse de Galettes*—pièce qui rappelle beaucoup une estampe de J. Van de Velde." The reader sees that the word *pièce*, which is in the singular number, refers to one etching only, and that the last mentioned.

The Pancake Woman (B. 124. M. 264.). Mr. Haden says that J. Van de Velde is "the reputed author" of *The Pancake Woman*, and refers to Vosmaer as an authority, but Vosmaer did not attribute either the design or the execution to Van de Velde, he merely said that the etching reminded him very much of a print by that artist. I have always been struck by something foreign to Rembrandt's genius in the scheme of this very cleverly executed plate. He may have accepted a suggestion.

Three Oriental Heads. First Head, Full Face, "Jacob Cats" (B. 286. M. 122.), *Second Head, a Profile to the Left* (B. 287. M. 123.), *Third Head, a Profile to the Right* (B. 288. M. 124.).

There is nothing by Rembrandt resembling these heads either in conception or execution, and there are two plates by Lievens resembling them in subject and treatment but less bitten. Mr. Haden believes all three to be by Lievens, who had a taste for staring eyes and heavy headdresses. To this M. Emile Michel replies that Lievens never was a pupil of Rembrandt, and it seems that he lived away from him. As there is a certain lightness of hand in Lievens that there is not here, and as the conception is obviously influenced by Lievens, I should conclude that the plates were done by some contemporary unknown to us.

A Beggar and a Companion Piece (B. 177. M. 112.). Easily recognisable by the inscriptions *t'is vinnich Kout* and *dats niet.*

Suggested by two plates of Beham with inscriptions identical in sense though not verbally the same. These with Rembrandt's name are cleverly executed but not so delicately as many of his beggars. Mr. Haden thinks that Savry etched them. Vosmaer mentions a sketch by Rembrandt with the first inscription. He may have made two sketches, etched afterwards, somewhat heavily, by another hand, under his direction or by his leave.

St. Jerome sitting at the Foot of a Tree (B. 100. M. 190.). I give Mr. Middleton's title. Mr. Haden calls the plate "St. Jerome in Meditation," which may easily confuse the reader, as Charles Blanc calls his 76 (M. 210.), *St. Jérôme en Méditation* (*manière noire*) and his 77 (M. 176.), *St. Jérôme en Méditation* (*Vieillard Homme de Lettres*).

Mr. Haden says that this little plate, easily known by the curious heraldic lion (the size of a greyhound), is by Bol. Though effective in its own way as an arrangement of lights and darks, and prettily

executed in a neat old-fashioned style we may be sure that it was neither designed nor executed by Rembrandt.

The Flight into Egypt; a small upright Print (B. 52. M. 184.). I have no belief in the authenticity of this little etching, which would be creditable to a minor artist.

Adverse Fortune (B. 111. M. 262.). Very unlike Rembrandt, both in conception and execution.

The Gold Weigher (B. 281. M. 138). From a design by Rembrandt but mainly executed by some inferior and more mechanical hand. The head and shoulders of the principal figure are believed to be by Rembrandt himself.

Rembrandt drawing from a Model (B. 192. M. 284.). Probably sketched by the master to be shaded by some assistant, and then abandoned before the shading was finished.

St. Jerome, an unfinished Piece (B. 104. M. 234.). Mr. Haden says that this is from a drawing by Titian sold in London at Dr. Wellesley's sale which was still recent in 1877. The lion, however, was absent from the drawing and the saint's place was occupied by a recumbent figure of Venus.

Mr. Haden does not say that the drawing has been reversed in the etching, so we may infer that it was not. It was Titian's habit in work that he did not correct with the square always to incline lines to the right. We find an inclination in the same direction here (see buildings). Rembrandt himself had not this tendency.

The landscape has been executed cleverly on a principle not usually Rembrandt's, objects presenting themselves in the flat as if cut out of card-board (see tree trunk). It reminds one of Félix Buhot's style with flat facets and short, decided strokes, a manually skilful style, but unlike Rembrandt's most personal way of etching. The figure of the saint may be by him.

Jan Antonides van der Linden (B. 264. M. 167.). Charles Blanc thought that changes made after the fourth state of this portrait were modern. M. Dutuit thinks that changes after the third state are not Rembrandt's. Mr. Middleton agrees, in substance, with M. Dutuit. In other words the greater part of the shading has been added by somebody else.

To me the whole plate is unsatisfactory, considered as a Rembrandt. The face may be creditable and has some quiet character, but anybody could etch the costume and the background, and as for the hand it is wooden and the forefinger a mere stick. It is very inferior to Rembrandt's usual incisive marking of character in hands.

The Onion Woman (B. 134. M. 66.). Mr. Middleton attributes the coarse and ugly appearance of this plate to over-biting, but over-biting would not affect the original intelligence of treatment in the use of line which is here mediocre and destitute of Rembrandt's usual delicacy of observation. Mr. Middleton argues that the execution here is no worse than that of *Lazarus Klap* (B. 171. M. 72.). Perhaps both plates may have been executed by Rembrandt in a lazy mood. "It is impossible," says Mr. Ruskin, "to bring drawing to any point of fine rightness with half-applied energy."

The Little Dog Sleeping (B. 158. M. 267.). I like the little doggie who sleeps soundly and who for the last two centuries has been sleeping more soundly still. Rembrandt, who took an interest in sleep, may have been tempted by the subject. Mr. Middleton says, "It is an open question whether *The Little Dog Sleeping* is the work of Rembrandt at all." A copy is in existence in which the sharp linear touches are wanting. The best plate is still inferior to *The Hog* (B. 157. M. 227.) and even to the *Sketch of a Dog* (B. 371. M. 266.) in the use of line, but it is well lighted and was admitted as authentic in the Burlington Club exhibition of 1877.

Besides the plates already given in this list there are a number of landscapes, principally of small size, what may be called pocket plates, that have been unwarrantably attributed to Rembrandt, and others that are doubtful. One of the best of these is a dry-point *Landscape, with a Fisherman in a Boat* (B. 243. M. rej. 19.), which previous catalogue makers had accepted, but which Mr. Middleton rejects. The difficulty in ascribing it to Rembrandt lies in the fact that we have no other dry-point certainly by him, of a similar subject, with which to compare it, and bitten plates do not afford materials for a technical comparison. I incline to accept this as Rembrandt's work because it looks so modern, and his other dry-point work does the same. I have no hesitation in rejecting the unmeaning scrawl called *Landscape, with a Canal and a Man*

Fishing (B. 244. M. rej. 8.), though an impression of it has been sold for the relatively prodigious sum of £148. There may be twenty minutes' work in this perfectly worthless performance. I agree, too, with the rejection of *A Landscape with five Cottages, unfinished* (B. 255. M. rej. 12.). The subject might have interested Rembrandt, but the execution is much weaker and less assured than his. There is a long-shaped *Land-*

Landscape with a Fisherman in a Boat. B. 243. *M. rej.* 19.

scape, with a clump of Trees by the Road Side (B. 229. M. rej. 15.), which admirably expresses the peculiar character of Dutch scenery, with the road on a dyke above the level of the polders, but the workmanship is certainly not Rembrandt's.

I have not space to go through all the rejected landscapes, and have already invited the reader to the study of some undoubtedly authentic ones, by which he will be able to form his own judgment.

It is much easier to say that Rembrandt did not execute certain pieces of work than to affirm who did execute them, and it is safer to accept the negative part of Mr. Haden's criticism than the positive. For

example, it appears certain now that Lievens and van Vliet were never pupils of Rembrandt, and in 1631 Lievens had left Holland. There may have been a difficulty about Bol's collaboration on account of his age, as he was only sixteen in 1632. Besides, it is always difficult to *name* assistants, especially when their work is mixed up with that of the master. There is a celebrated and successful living etcher from pictures who has often employed an assistant whom I know personally. I am familiar with the styles of both artists, but should not be able to separate their work on the same plate. The collaboration is kept secret and not a critic or other artist living has ever suspected it, still less has he been able to guess the assistant's name. I know it because he told me.

Just a word in conclusion. I have been studying the works of Rembrandt's immediate predecessors and contemporaries in etching with a view to understand his relative position more accurately. The result has been only to deepen my sense of the master's incomparable greatness, of his sterling originality, and especially of that wonderful quality in him by which he does not belong to the seventeenth century but quite as much to the closing years of the nineteenth. In like manner, when it comes, he will be at home in the twentieth century, and in many another after it.

FINIS.

Isola Point, Malta.

MALTA

AND THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS

By the

REV. W. K. R. BEDFORD, M.A.

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MALTA

I

EARLY HISTORY

When the traveller to the East has accomplished half of his Mediterranean voyage, which is generally on the fourth day after leaving Gibraltar, he enters the Malta channel, a stretch of sea between Sicily on the north, the snowy peak of Etna occasionally making itself visible, and on the south a rocky shore, which swells gradually up to hills of some 600 or 700 feet in height, without trees, and therefore presenting a heavy though undulating outline; about a third of its surface bare rock, and the other two-thirds partitioned off into small fields by enclosures of loose stones similar to those of Westmoreland or the North Riding. This is Gozo, and his eye will inform him that the country is productive and highly cultivated, even if another sense is not penetrated by the odour of garlic, the favourite green crop of the Gozo farmer. The fields in March are red with clover blossom; the orange groves are in flower or fruit all the year long, yet there is no vacuity or want of energy about the people. Passing the mouth of the strait of Comino where, upon the little island of the same name, the unlucky *Sultan* man of war was wrecked a few years ago, the steeper cliffs of the western coast-line of Malta come into view, in colour of a bright orange, and the eye can distinctly make out that great geological fault which traverses both islands, as Mr. Adams so happily says, "just as if Atlas had raised the entire island group to the level of the higher plateau, when a large portion in the middle gave way and sank, leaving the remainder of Malta south-eastward,

and the west of Gozo, beyond Migiar Scini gorge, at much about the same levels." As the voyager passes the bay of St. Paul, now clearly identified with the Apostle's shipwreck, the coast-line becomes less interesting, nor is there anything in the whole face of the country which can be called imposing or picturesque until the harbour of Valletta comes into view. There are, however, hidden among these unprepossessing terraces remnants of prehistoric architecture, which so good an authority as Professor Sayce has pronounced superior to any others to be found in the Mediterranean, relics which the visitor to Malta ought not to pass by without notice.

Hagiar Kim—the stone of Veneration—is the most accessible and best preserved of these vestiges of hoary eld. We can only carry back its modern history to the excavation in the year 1839, when the soil and stones accumulated during centuries of neglect were first cleared away—with unfortunately hardly adequate precaution—nevertheless the seven statuettes of sandstone, preserved in the museum at Valletta, were found here—images which are identified with the Kabiri, worshipped in Lemnos as the ancient workers in metal—though these, "figures fat as Tunisian Jewesses, seated on the ground like Chinese *poussahs*," headless, but with holes and sockets which indicate that a nodding neck was fitted into the vacant place, have assuredly, as M. Darcel notes, more to do with Ceres than with Vulcan, with abundance and fertility than with subterranean toil. There is also preserved in the museum an altar, and the sacred slab ornamented with an egg-shaped figure between two volutes symbolising the Universe. Later excavations carried out by the Director of Education, Dr. Caruana, have developed the complete plan of the temple, and ascertained the mode of its construction. The gigantic slabs of stone employed in the external walls, and the traces of the oracular chamber, the enclosures for the animals used in sacrifice, and other details, plainly connect it with the Sidonian period of architecture and worship; and the discovery of a little image of Astarte (Astaroth) supplies a link of additional certainty.

It would seem that these builders arrived in the island from the south-east, landing at the Marsa Scirocco harbour, in immediate contiguity to which are the remains of a large temple, and also (which is a primary requirement in Malta) a huge excavation with its roof

Ruins of Hagiar Kim.

supported by large blocks of stone for the purpose of a water-tank, now empty but in good preservation. Here too was found, some time previous to 1694, the bilingual inscription, which is the clue to much of our knowledge of the Phœnician language, a Greek translation following the Sidonian letters. It was engraved in duplicate on the base of a pair of marble Cippi, of which one is in the museum at Valletta ; an urn or balustrade-shaped stem is ornamented with a large palmated leaf, and in the entablature is incised the inscription

Kabiri in the Museum at Valletta.

in both languages, presumably of the same date. It reads thus: "A vow from Abdosir and his brother Osirschamar, sons of Osirschamar son of Abdosir, to my Lord Melkarte, Lord of Tyre, praying that he may bless them whenever he hears their words." In the Greek the names of Dionysus, Serapion, and Hercules, are substituted for Abdosir, Osirschamar, and Melkarte.

The same palmated foliage of ears symmetrically arranged, rising from a kind of basket with two handles, forms the principal ornament of the altar already referred to, a disk of stone supported

by a small vase, decorated with pilasters at each angle, and in each face hollowed out into a niche; the whole of the smooth portions of the surface being riddled with punctures, as are many of the ordinary slabs and stones which compose the inner walls of the temples.

It may be conjectured that the immigrants selected Marsa Scirocco as their port, not only from its naturally presenting itself to the voyager from the east, but for its shelving shores, which allowed them to beach their galleys. A singular piece of evidence as to the subsidence of the island exists here. In the hard stone, tracks of wheels are found leading direct to the seashore and disappearing beneath the waves—in some instances at a considerable distance the same tracks reappear, and are an evident continuation of a well-frequented road once existing, now covered by the sea. With the exception of the two deep inlets of Valletta, the Marsa Scirocco and St. Paul's Bay, the island possesses no haven worthy of the name, the whole of the south and south-west portion of the coast being composed of abrupt, though not lofty, cliffs, their regular outline only broken by small chines hardly ample enough to hold a boat.

The southern side of the island appears to have had attractions for these settlers—while traces of their presence are not numerous on the north and north-eastern shores, a few foundations upon the Corradino heights near Valletta being sole indication. There is another large temple in good preservation scarce a quarter of a mile from Hagiar Kim, a strong testimony to the existence of a large population n the vicinity, and the whole of the range of eminences which rise on the southern and western shores, up to the very border of the grand fault—the abrupt fissure running in a north-westerly direction across both islands, Malta and Gozo—are honeycombed by caves, dwellings, and tombs dating from the period of Phœnician occupation. Beyond the straits and the little islet of Comino, indeed beyond the portion of Gozo affected by the fault, is one of the largest and finest of these temples, known familiarly as the Giant's Tower, which from its position in the side of a hill, admitting of its being shut off from the public, and from the care bestowed on its preservation by the owners, a cultured Maltese noble family, is not so much injured as its sister edifices. It is of the same general ground-plan—elliptical

Walter L. Colle Ph. Sc.

Rabato in the Island of Gozo.

chambers in pairs, with apsidal chapels attached, being the invariable characteristic of all of them, the altar with its pitted surface and the doorposts pierced with square holes for bars, being likewise invariably present. A few flint knives, bones of animals, often calcined, and rude pottery, mostly broken, are all that can now be discovered on these sites. But their builders have left a much more permanent trace in

Phœnician Pottery in the Museum at Valletta.

the present population of the islands, who, especially at Gozo, in language, superstitions, and usages, preserve a strong Oriental bias, and are evidently distinct from every one of the various nations who subsequently to the Phœnician period have held in succession a temporary supremacy over them.

The Phœnicians are supposed to have been in the islands B.C. 1519 ; the Egyptians were there also, as the triad group of deities carved of the

native stone, discovered in 1713, bears testimony, and in B.C. 736 the Greeks annexed the islands, and gave to the larger its name Melita. The Carthaginians expelled the Greeks, and at the conclusion of the struggle for supremacy between Carthage and Rome, Malta became a part of the extensive dominions of the latter power, and soon experienced the advantage of the rule of the great civilising empire. Its commerce was fostered, its industries stimulated, and it became a thriving mart. From various sources we learn that the islands were then wealthy, attractive, and adorned with many noble specimens of Roman architecture, but, as the Vandals seized them in 484 A.D., and from that time until about the end of the eleventh century they were a mere haunt of Arab and Saracen pirates, few relics of this period of peace and prosperity remain.

Thus the Roman remains a few years ago were comprised in two or three small statues of great beauty, such as the Romulus and Remus preserved in the museum, some glass and pottery in the same receptacle, and carved inscriptions and bas reliefs, there, and in private collections; but in 1881 a valuable discovery was made at the ancient capital Notabile, beneath the glacis of the fortifications. Some planting of an ornamental character was going on, when one of the labourers threw up with his spade a few squares of mosaic, which were fortunately noticed by a native ecclesiastic of learned and antiquarian tastes, who was passing by, and the matter having been brought to the notice of the Governor, a systematic excavation was commenced, which finally resulted in the disinterment of very considerable remains of a Roman villa of large dimensions and handsome ornamentation. Statues, mosaic pavements, and a large quantity of glass and pottery were brought to light, and are deposited in a kind of museum constructed within the house itself. Within a very few yards of the house is the entrance to the city, where, built into a niche in the wall, still stands a statue of Juno of Roman workmanship, and closer still is an early Christian monument, of which the original cross has been replaced by a modern one, displaying on the capital of its shaft the type of carving which connects the Roman period of art with the Byzantine. Near the cave of St. Paul, too, are catacombs which are probably Christian in their origin. Here, too, we find fragments of Norman architecture in the streets

of the old town, that profoundly silent city which so impressed the author of the *Crescent and the Cross;* but, with the exception of a part of the castle of St. Angelo, nothing else remains of Roger of Sicily's work, unless it be a fine Norman capital, preserved in the museum, which was formerly part of a well in the Borgo, or old town, behind St. Angelo.

Egyptian Figure in the Museum at Valletta.

It is not improbable that when handed over by the Emperor Charles V. to the Order of St. John in 1530, the island of Malta was really at a lower pitch of decay than when Roger expelled the corsairs, the population of Malta being estimated at only 12,000 and that of Gozo at 5,000 souls, who were represented as being almost in a state of destitution. The wretched villages in which the inhabitants dwelt, termed casals, partook of the general air of poverty and misery which everywhere prevailed. That this was partly caused by the exposure of the island to the ravages of pirates is evident, but the neglected condition of the arboriculture, which could not but have an influence on the climate, had much to do with the poverty and want of food of which the natives complained. Such however was the impression of the sterility and hopeless indigence of Malta in 1530, that the Hospitallers, homeless though they were, and unable to persuade their patron, the Emperor, to give them possession of the city and port of Syracuse, which they, like Nelson afterwards, preferred to Malta, would probably have found some plausible reason for declining what seemed to them at best

a questionable boon, if L'Isle Adam, and some of the more far-sighted and enterprising of the naval commanders, had not recognised in the matchless harbours of the north-east of the island their appropriate citadel from which to carry on the perennial war with the corsair. But before they were permitted to take possession of their new domain, the native population, like the men of Kent meeting the conqueror of Hastings, insisted upon having their independence recognised. Feeble as were their fortifications, Notabile being surrounded merely by a paltry rampart and ditch, and the only other place of strength on the island being Roger of Sicily's old castle of St. Angelo, on which two or three cannon had been mounted, but which otherwise was antiquated and ruinous, the Maltese displayed the same patriotic spirit which enabled them in after years to drive out the French, and refused to be handed over by their late lord in dumb acquiescence to a new sovereign.

Although essentially Oriental by race, the native population of Malta have never betrayed the slightest symptoms of any leaning towards Ismalism. A Maltese of the present day is prompt to confess that there is no God but Allah, for that is his vernacular word for Deity, but for the second part of the creed of the Moslem he entertains a hatred and contempt almost fanatical. The same feeling actuated the inhabitants who tendered their conditional allegiance to the Grand Master; and his religious as well as his political distinction disposed them to receive him with respect and amity. But one of the conditions of the concordat does not look at first sight as if it could be explained satisfactorily. No Maltese was to become a Knight of the Order. This article could not have been introduced because the islanders had no aristocracy; there are titles of nobility still existing in Malta, whose owners can trace back their pedigrees to patents as old as our own baronies of Camoys and Hastings; there are sculptured memorials of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the arms of untitled present-day gentlefolk emblazoned in all the dignity of scutigeri (esquires) upon their panels, and we can only conjecture that the desire to maintain the traditions of an independent nation induced the native dignitaries to forego a prospect, which though dazzling to ambition, would have been ruinous to autonomy. It was at any rate, as their conduct proved, from no servile instinct that they agreed to this self-denying ordinance.

The rule of the Knights of St. John is such an essential part of the

history of the island, had such an effect upon its fortunes, and left such vast and abiding memorials of its two and a half centuries of existence, that it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the previous history of the renowned fraternity, to be known henceforth as Knights of Malta.

Before the first Crusade certain merchants of Amalfi established in the Holy City of Jerusalem a hospital or lodging for the reception of pilgrims, dedicated to St. John, either the Almoner (a Greek Bishop) or, as in later years they contended, the Precursor—John the Baptist. When the fierce Turcoman horde overpowered the milder rule of the Caliphs, Gerard, Rector of the Hospital, co-operated with Peter the Hermit in originating the Crusade, and Gerard's successor, Raymond de Puy, remodelled the society upon a military basis, similar to that which had already given the Order of Templars so prominent a rank in the warlike concerns of Christendom. In 1187, after having gained an honourable place in the history of the struggles to maintain the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, the Hospitallers were driven from their original abode, the ruins of which, in the Muristân at Jerusalem, have been excavated in later years by the Germans, and many interesting relics of the old buildings brought to light. The Hospitallers then settled down at S. Jean d'Acre, whence a century later they were again expelled, after a fierce contest, by the Moslems. Retiring to Cyprus, their Grand Master John de Villiers adopted for them a fresh career, and they secured and held with more or less success during several centuries the naval supremacy of the Mediterranean. One of their earliest and greatest exploits was the capture of Rhodes in 1310, whither they removed their headquarters, and received a considerable accession of resources from the suppression of the rival Order of Knights Templars, much of whose forfeited property was granted to them. Here, as the order began to attract recruits from different countries, commenced the system of *langues*, of which there were at first six—English, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French and German. Later this arrangement was changed, and three French langues were formed, namely, France, Auvergne and Provence. To Spain, or Aragon, one of Castile was subsequently added, absorbing Portugal, and with Italy, England, and Germany, making seven. In 1476 the office of Grand Master was filled by the election of Peter d'Aubusson, a soldier who had gained high distinction in the wars of Charles VII. against the

English in France, but who had not long to wait in his new capacity for an opportunity of gaining still higher distinction as a successful commander, by defending the city of Rhodes against the whole power of the Ottoman Porte, wielded at that period by the fortunate and talented Mahomet II.

The Sultan did not entirely depend upon force, for among other spies in his pay was an able and astute renegade, a German, generally spoken of in contemporary chronicles as Master George, who found admittance into the garrison for the purpose of betraying them on opportunity His treason was discovered, and he paid the penalty with his life. The open attack was not more successful, and the remains of the Turkish host, whose original numbers have been stated at 100,000, and were certainly not less than 70,000, retired baffled with enormous loss. Mahomet was still bent upon the reduction of Rhodes when he died, and his two sons, Bajazet and Djem, or Zizim, disputed the succession. The latter, defeated, escaped to Rhodes, where he surrendered to the Grand Master. Bajazet, in consternation, plied the Order with promises and gifts, concluded a treaty of peace, and presented the hand of St. John, which Mahomet had taken with the city of Constantinople, but could not prevail upon the Order to surrender their guest, who was transferred to the protection, first of the King of France, and then of the Pope (Borgia), by whom he was poisoned in 1495. In 1521 Solyman, who had succeeded to the Turkish throne, determined again to attempt the expulsion of the Knights, and with nearly 200,000 soldiers and sailors succeeded in overwhelming a garrison of less than 7,000 of all ranks. In December, 1522, the Grand Master, after a six months' siege, was obliged to capitulate and lead the remnant of his forces in search of a new home. Candia, Messina, and Syracuse, were tried in vain, and many efforts made to obtain assistance to regain Rhodes, until at last the Emperor Charles V. offered the islands of Malta and Gozo, with complete sovereignty, clogging, however, his gift with the possession of Tripoli, which, during their brief tenure of it was simply a drain on their resources. The original grant remains preserved in the armoury at Malta, and with it the trumpet which sounded their retreat from Rhodes.

II

THE GREAT SIEGE

THE establishment of the Order of St. John in Malta led at no distant date to the event which it may not be unreasonably supposed the politic Emperor had in his mind when he offered them the possession of that post of dignity and danger as the advanced guard of Christendom; it drew upon them the concentrated efforts of the whole Turkish power to crush and destroy them. The thirty-five years which had elapsed since their removal to these new head-quarters had convinced Sultan Solyman of the thorn which had thus been planted in his side, and he not unnaturally aspired to consummate, by a similar exploit to the capture of Rhodes, the glories of a reign which had won already for him the title of Magnificent. Poverty of resources, and internal dissensions among the Knights themselves, had hindered them from placing their fortifications in so complete a state of defence as might have been anticipated, of which the spies of the Sultan kept him well informed; and their Grand Master, John Parisot de la Vallette, was one of their most enterprising naval commanders, and if allowed leisure was likely to continue to work mischief to the Moslem fleets. In 1565 a great armament was collected at Constantinople which La Vallette soon understood (for the Christians had their spies too) was destined for Malta. He did his utmost to improve his fortifications, and exhausted in his appeals for aid the Courts of Europe; finding at length that his main reliance would have to be upon his own Knights and the Maltese militia, about 6,000 in all. These, with some 1,200 regular troops, the 500 Knights, and a body of volunteers, chiefly Italians, made up less than 9,000 men, with which to sustain the assault of more than 30,000 Turkish troops, of whom 4,500 were drawn from that extraordinary force of Christian

conscript children bred to fighting, who, under the name of janissaries, were the backbone of the Turkish supremacy in war.

The position which the Knights had to defend may be seen on the plan of Valletta. The central tongue of land where the city now stands was then a rugged rocky eminence known as Mount Schebarras, uninhabited and unfortified save by a castle at the north-eastern extremity, which commanded the entrance to both harbours, named after St. Erasmus

*** *At the time of the siege the only fortified positions were Senglea and the Borgo, now Città Vittoriosa, with St. Elmo.*

Plan of Valletta.

the patron Saint of mariners, St. Elmo. St. Angelo, with the Borgo in its rear, stood upon the third promontory from the entrance to the Great Harbour, and the next projection called Isola or Senglea, from a garden and menagerie established there by G. M. La Sengle, had at its landward side, the castle of St. Michael, of which a few traces remain in the modern fort now occupying its site. On one of the turrets which face the Great Harbour, may still be seen the carved

figure of the eye, the ear, and a goose, perpetual reminders of the vigilance required of the garrison. La Vallette protected the upper or south-west flank of Senglea with a strong stockade on the edge of the water-line: from Isola Point to St. Angelo, across the mouth of the creek, he drew a huge chain; while at the other end of the creek a bridge of boats connected the two peninsulas, and served as a defence to the galleys laid up in the harbour, and another stockade on the north-east side of the Bourg completed the seaward circle of defence. He manned the inner line of defence shown in the plan, that is to say, the redoubts and bastions which faced the land, with his trustiest Knights, and told off for the garrison of St. Elmo a body of selected soldiers of approved valour. A small garrison was left in the ancient capital, but no attempt was made to defend the rest of the island, or its dependency Gozo. Having made these dispositions of his scanty force, he again addressed a final appeal to Christendom for aid, and directed the Knights who had not yet repaired to his standard, to rendezvous at Syracuse and rejoin the garrison on convenient occasion. On the 15th May, the huge Turkish Armada arrived off the island, and, under the command of the Grand Admiral Piali, disembarked from 180 vessels the host of troops, whose commandant was the veteran Mustapha, a brave but cruel and obstinate soldier, between whom and Piali considerable difference of opinion was often arising with the effect which divided councils always have upon any enterprise. For example, Mustapha insisted upon commencing the campaign by the siege of St. Elmo, which, as he justly argued, presented an insuperable obstacle to the entrance of their ships within the safe anchorage of the Marsamuscetto; and in spite of the desire of Piali to await the arrival of Dragut, the famous Algerine corsair, this course was adopted, batteries were erected upon Mount Schebarras, and an investment of St. Angelo from the heights above the harbour also commenced. Mark Anthony Viperan, a Knight who printed a narrative of these transactions in 1567, congratulates himself upon the foresight of the Knights in poisoning a spring at Marsa, where the Turks fixed their main camp, by which about eight hundred men were done to death! So far however as any military operations were concerned, La Vallette, feeling the inadequacy of his force, withdrew them within the walls, and only permitted any offensive movements when provisions could be brought

in by a convoy. He kept St. Elmo supplied with fresh defenders by reinforcements despatched under the cover of night, and by a judicious admixture of encouragement and rebuke worked upon the feelings of the garrison, until they became animated with a resolution to die at their posts.

The history of the whole siege has been so admirably written by the late General Porter, that it is unnecessary to do more than summarise his narrative. For more than four weeks the garrison of St. Elmo were

The Goose, Isola Point.

subjected to daily assaults from the overwhelming Moslem force, and from the cannonade of a battery which, if less rapid in its fire than that of the siege artillery of the present day, from the enormous calibre of the guns, exercised terrific power of destruction; thirty-six of these heavy pieces were employed, and had not the fortress been to a great extent composed of the solid rock of the peninsula itself, it would have been entirely swept away: this circumstance also preserving the defenders from attack by mines. The outworks were speedily taken by the besiegers, and the main fort not so much breached in any particular

place as reduced throughout to a mass of ruin. Still the brave defenders held on.

Again and again they appealed for recall or reinforcement. To the former step La Vallette could not bring himself to consent, and at one time actually proposed to take the command of the post in person—the latter requirement he supplied by despatching boats with volunteers from St. Angelo, who found admission through a subterranean passage from the rocky shore below the fort. When Dragut arrived, one of his first undertakings was to construct a battery which would command this landing place—and prevent any boat from reaching the fort. A great assault had been repelled upon June 16th, but now the defenders saw that their days were numbered; upon the 22nd another escalade was repulsed, but only sixty of the garrison remained; and an expert swimmer contrived to reach St. Angelo, and reported their desperate case. La Vallette despatched a force in five boats to bring off the survivors, but Dragut's battery, which stood on the rock now occupied by Ball's monument, prevented them from being able to succour their comrades.

Then, in the hours when trouble is succeeded by rest, the wounded and exhausted heroes partook of the Sacrament in the little chapel below the entrance of the fort, and prepared to die sword in hand; some, unable to stand upon their feet, were placed in chairs upon the breach, and for four hours the Turks were successfully resisted. At last the survivors were simply overwhelmed by numbers; a few expert divers made good their escape to St. Angelo, and nine were saved by some of Dragut's corsairs. Mustapha caused the heads of the knights to be cut off and placed on poles, while the trunks, extended on planks in the form of a cross, with the same figure gashed upon their breasts, were thrown into the harbour, and floating to St. Angelo, aroused the frenzied indignation of the garrison, who fired from their cannon the bleeding heads of Turkish prisoners by way of retaliation. During the progress of the attack, Dragut had received a mortal wound, and in his tent, on the point now known as Fort Tigne, he received the news of the fall of St. Elmo and expired, the one man of military genius in the Turkish army. In addition to this irreparable loss, 8,000 Turks fell. The loss of the Christians was 1,500, of whom 130 were members of the Order.

The chapel where the last consolations of religion were received by the garrison, was reedified in 1649 by G. M. Lascaris, and still remains on its old foundations, deep in the rock on the right after emerging from the tunnel which forms the eastern entrance to the fort. Its dimensions are forty feet by twenty; it is vaulted with round arches, and has a small recess for the altar; the sides and spandrils are carved in arabesque relief. There are several coats of arms undefaced among the ornaments, for at the time of the French occupation it was preserved from their vandalism by being full of rubbish, which was cleared out by General Montague, R.E., a few years ago.

That the obstinate defence of St. Elmo saved Malta is generally admitted by historians. "What will not the parent cost us, if the child has been purchased at so terrible a price?" is the recorded exclamation of Mustapha when surveying St. Angelo from the ruins of the captured work. Still its fall gave them a great advantage. Their fleet entered the Marsamuscetto harbour at once, and about eighty of the smaller vessels were hauled by slaves over the neck of land from the upper end of one harbour to the other, and launched on the waters above Senglea. Nor was it any longer feasible for supplies for the garrison to pass from the outer sea into the harbour. The greater part of the Turkish army were moved round to the rear of the two peninsulas, and enclosed them completely by their trenches. Just before being thus shut in, however, La Vallette had received a welcome reinforcement of about 700 men, including forty-two knights who had taken advantage of a mist which fortunately overspread the coast. They also brought news of a much larger force assembled in Sicily for their aid. The value of the reinforcement was soon put to the test, for Mustapha, alarmed at the rumours which reached him of the help which had been rendered and expected, determined to press the assault with vigour. He tried unsuccessfully to bring La Vallette to a negotiation for surrender, and on the 15th of July he made a great effort, attacking St. Angelo with his own artillery, while Senglea was assailed by sea and land by a fresh force of 2,500 corsairs who had just arrived, under the command of a leader named Hassan, son of the famous corsair Barbarossa and son-in-law of Dragut. Candelissa, Hassan's lieutenant,

led the attack of the boats upon the stockade, and effected a landing under the spur of Fort St. Michael, but after a severe struggle was driven ignominiously back by the Spanish commander Zanoguerra, who himself fell in the moment of victory. Hassan made no impression upon the landward lines, but the greatest loss sustained by the Moslem was the destruction of a large body of janissaries, despatched by Mustapha in ten boats, who, in endeavouring to round the point of St. Angelo, were exposed to the fire of a battery of three guns placed *à fleur d'eau*, by which nine of them were sunk with a loss of several hundred men. It ought to be mentioned that the success of the Knights on this occasion was owing in some degree to their having received full information of the enemy's design from a deserter, a Greek named Lascaris, who held a high position in the Turkish army. Although at first some suspicions were entertained of his good faith, he turned out to be a sincere and valuable ally, and one of his family in after years obtained the baton of Grand Master. Mustapha now assumed the command of the attack on Senglea, leaving the Borgo to Piali; the artillery on both fronts soon reduced the ramparts to a state of ruin, and on the 7th of August a combined attack was made, which on the Senglea front was almost successful; the horse-tail standards of the Moslem were planted on the breach, and the leading column had forced its way through the defenders, when on a sudden Mustapha gave the signal for retreat. The cause of this was a diversion from Città Vecchia, showing how correct was the criticism of Dragut, who pointed out on his arrival that the Turks ought never to have left an armed post in their rear, although he considered that it was inadvisable at that stage to withdraw forces for the reduction of the capital. The enemy therefore kept up a pretty strict blockade, with occasional demonstrations against the city walls, and on the other hand the garrison of Notabile used to send out parties of cavalry to forage and harass stragglers. One of these flying columns of about three hundred musketeers, and as many cavalry, were, as Viperan informs us, making their usual reconnaissance, when the noise of the combat and the fact that they were almost unopposed, led them to believe that a critical assault was taking place, and that a diversion would be of great use; so posting the

musketeers in a position to secure their retreat, they galloped into the camp of the Turks, only occupied by a few sentinels and the wounded, and with loud shouts and demonstrations cut down all whom they met. The rear of the assailing column took the alarm, imagined that the army from Sicily had landed, and rushed back to their tents.

From this date the story of the siege is the same from day to day : efforts, constantly repulsed, to take the city by storm, mines and countermines, fights in the water between Turkish swimmers armed with axes, endeavouring to cut the chain at the mouth of the creek, and Maltese swimmers with daggers defending it ; all the while, however, the small body of defenders growing weaker, and less able to man the fortifications, until it seemed at last as if they must be worn out as the garrison of St. Elmo had been. The Viceroy of Sicily, who had by this time under his command at Syracuse a considerable body of troops and a large fleet, still made no sign of coming to the rescue. His supineness had two parents ; one that, from the first, the Turkish fleet had the superiority at sea, and even now Candelissa with a large squadron was constantly hovering round the mouth of the port ; the other that his master, the cold calculating Philip of Spain, had ordered him not to intervene until the decisive moment when the Order could no longer hold out against the force of the Turk. So greatly did he feel his responsibility, that he despatched an envoy, Salazar, to inspect personally and report upon the state of affairs. Viperan gives a curious narrative of this mission ; the envoy reached Città Vecchia in safety, and with an escort of sixty horse started from thence at four o'clock in the morning for Tarscien, a village about a mile in the rear of the Turkish camp, where they left their escort, and Salazar, with five companions only, penetrated right through the lines of the enemy, left unguarded with true Oriental indiscipline, and returned at daylight to the city, not however without a skirmish with a Mahometan force. A characteristic incident is narrated in connection with this by Viperan. A Maltese horseman had seized a Turk, and tying his hands hoisted him *en croupe*, as a prisoner : the Turk got his hands free, and in his turn gripped his captor so tight that he could neither draw sword nor rein ; another cavalier of St. John thereupon ran the Turk through, and tumbled him on the ground. The

Città Vecchia, Malta.

Maltese was not satisfied without a trophy, and while hacking at his foe's head, three more of the pursuing force fell on him and he lost his own !

It became evident however that succour could not be long delayed. When even Protestant England put up public prayers in her churches for the deliverance of Malta, the saturnine Philip must have felt shamed into action. The superhuman exertions of the defenders, continued so unintermittingly under the tropical heat of a Malta summer, could not endure for ever. La Vallette himself had moved his quarters to a small house near the chief point of attack, where his arms are this day visible carved in the wall : this movement was probably made in consequence of a suggestion which had been brought forward in anticipation of another grand attack, of which they had been forewarned, on the 23rd August, that they should abandon the towns, and defend themselves in the castle of St. Angelo. The assault was repulsed, and so was another on the 1st of September, when the besiegers actually were forced to the charge by blows from the swords of their own officers. Yet when the Viceroy of Sicily called a council, a speaker urged that considering the expressed intention of the Turks to abandon Malta after destroying the Order, it would be better to allow them to do so, and reoccupy it. Happily this prudent counsellor stood alone. At length a horseman brought news to Mustapha, just as he was assembling his hordes for one more effort to storm the defences, that an army had landed from Sicily : at once a retreat was commenced, and all the war material hurried to the ships, which was scarcely effected ere the garrison occupied the deserted posts, and the Turkish commanders learned that less than 9,000 men had landed from the Christian fleet. Hurriedly determining to try the fortune of war once more, Mustapha landed about an equal number of soldiers at St. Paul's Bay, and began a march towards the capital. An irregular skirmish with the advanced guard led to a general engagement, in which the Mahometan force was driven to the ships with heavy loss. So ended this famous siege ; about 40,000 men had been engaged in the attack, of whom barely 15,000 survived to return to Constantinople. The number of those engaged in the defence was originally under 9,000, and about 700 were added in the course of the struggle, of these only 600 were left unwounded at the close. It

was a world-renowned effort of heroic endurance. A mass of requiem is still sung annually on the 7th of September for those who fell in this

Strada San Giovanni, Valletta. Drawn by A. Ansted.

famous war. As the bells of St. John's begin their mournful toll (for splendid as they are and silvery, the Maltese manage to make the worst

of their bells), the people may be heard to exclaim: "It is the deliverance of the Knights."

La Vallette survived until August 1568. He saw with pride and well-deserved pleasure the laying of the first stone of the memorial city, for which the funds were collected under the authority of a Bull from Pope Pius the Fourth from Catholics in all lands in honour of the Knights. It now occupies the surface of Mount Schebarras, and is known by the name of the victorious hero himself: but he did not live to see its completion, and in fact his plan was never carried out in its entirety. The original design was to cut down the rocky peninsula to a nearly level platform, surrounded by fortifications: but this purpose was only carried out through a very small area, and the "streets of stairs" represent the failure to realise it. In 1577 his remains were transferred to the crypt of St. John's, where they lie under a magnificent sarcophagus of bronze, surmounted by a recumbent figure in full knightly panoply, and with a Latin epitaph from the pen of his faithful secretary, the Englishman, Oliver Starkey, which it may be worth while to give, because Porter's book, usually so accurate, contains an erroneous version.

"Salvator eques, Vallettæ conditor unus;
Invicta ex Illo nobile nomen habet.
Hic Syriæ Lybiæque pavor, Tuletaque quondam
Europæ, edomitis sacra per arma Getis.
Primus in hac alma quam condidit urbe sepultus
Vallettæ eterno dignus honore jacet."

His hat and sword are still reverentially preserved in the church of St. Lorenzo in the old Borgo.

III

ST. JOHN'S CONVENTUAL CHURCH

A CHURCH of which Walter Scott could write that it was the most magnificent he had ever seen, is worthy of some special and detailed description, often as it has been attempted. The work of La Vallette's architect, Girolamo Cussar, it combines externally the characteristics of a place of strength with that of worship.

"Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,"

as was said of Durham Cathedral;—but if this causes the exterior to be in some degree heavy and meagre, it is internally admirable in its just proportion, superb in the profusion of its ornament, unequalled in its sepulchral magnificence. What it must have been before its spoliation by the French, only the imagination of the author of *Vathek* could conceive. Still grander must have been the effect when the central nave was filled by chevaliers of the Order, for chaplains, esquires, and others of inferior grades were relegated to the side chapels (whence came a by-word, "A gentleman of the transept")—when the magnificent silver-gilt chandeliers, one of which alone held 130, and another 97 lights, shed a rich glow upon their picturesque habits, and the splendour of the pictorial decoration was enhanced by the beautiful tapestry copied from the finest works of Rubens by the famous De Vos brothers of Brussels. Even the heavy exterior, looking all the heavier from being in line with the palaces of the Grand Prior and the Treasurer of the Order, has, viewed from the roof, a Cyclopean grandeur inseparable from huge symmetrical masses of stone, and the noble simplicity of the Campo Santo on the south side of the church has a dignity becoming the heroic traditions of the Knights of St. John, whose bones lie beneath. But within, from floor to ceiling, one blaze of rich memorial antiquity attracts you on every side. The simple barrel vault which

constitutes the nave is fifty feet in breadth, and is divided on either side of its length of 187 feet, by massive piers and arches, from six transeptal chapels, which again communicate by smaller arches, one with another, so as to produce the effect of side aisles. The floor, both of the nave and chapels, is paved with tombstones of chevaliers of bygone days, more than four hundred in number, one vast mass of heraldic emblazonment in mosaic of precious marbles of every shade and colour, the mere

Exterior of St. John's Conventual Church. Drawn by R. Serle.

catalogue of these elaborate works of artistic fancy being contained in three folio volumes ; while gorgeous piles of sculpture interspersed with bronzes and paintings adorn the walls of the transepts, and mark the resting-places of the later Grand Masters of the Order, and of other illustrious personages.

The roof is *à chevet plat*, of semi-cylindrical form, pierced with circular

apertures for light in lieu of dormers, an arrangement which detracts a little from the effect of the pictorial decoration, which is of the florid later Italian school. Matteo Preti, generally spoken of as Il Calabrese, from the country of his birth, was the artist of this ceiling, executing his designs in oil upon the stone in that style known to Italian artists as *Sotto in su*, which gives a relief to the figures as viewed from below. Preti resided in Malta from 1661 to 1699, and during the whole of that period was employed upon this roof and similar works for the Order.[1] He was buried among his patrons in the church which he adorned. The subjects which he selected are, appropriately, scenes from the history of St. John the Baptist, in seven zones or panels, which are again surrounded or divided by figures of saints, martyrs, and heroes, illustrative of the history of the Order. Between 1867 and 1874 the ceiling was restored by a native artist. The drawing of the various figures is extremely correct and spirited, and the colour rich without tawdriness. In one of the panels, which represents the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod, there is a singular instance of that far-fetched fancy which in Elizabethan English goes by the name of "conceit." Hovering in the air over the damsel is a demon, who is engaged in moving her limbs by strings after the manner of a marionette figure—a misplaced piece of ingenuity, more defensible, however, than that of Michael Angelo da Caravaggio, who, in his fine painting of the decollation of St. John, in the Oratory Chapel, makes the blood trickling from the trunk form the letters M A C. In spite of this bad taste, the painting is a superb one, and worth inspecting, though hung in a bad light. In this chapel, formerly used for the instruction of novices, there are some handsome benches carved or inlaid with the devices of the various langues of which the Order was composed. Here, too, was kept the great relic of the Order, the hand of St. John, sent as a present by Sultan Bajazet to Grand Master D'Aubusson, possibly with a hope that his brother and rival Zizim, who had fled to the

1 M. Darcel, the Director of the Gobelins, a competent critic, says of Preti, that though only a painter of the second rank he throws himself with such ease into vast and striking compositions, unites with such skill heaven and earth, poses his figures and draperies so unconstrainedly, as to compare most favourably with modern designers, whose decorative contrivances have been extolled by ignorant leaders of public opinion as too beautiful for the ceilings for which they were intended.

Interior of St. John's Church, Malta.

protection of the Knights of Rhodes, might be given up in return. It was brought hither from Rhodes, and inclosed in a splendid gauntlet

Tomb of the Grana Master Pinto.

shaped monstrance of solid gold, bedecked with costly gems ; in front of this lay a gold ring, set with a large diamond (or sapphire), which

Napoleon put upon his own finger, and ordered the case to be taken on board the *Orient*, contemptuously leaving the "dead hand" to Grand Master Hompesch, who carried it to St. Petersburg and presented it to the Emperor Paul.

If we take the chapels in order, the next on the right hand is dedicated to St. James, and assigned to the langue of Castile. Here is the monument of Grand Master Pinto, a Portuguese who presided over the Order at the time of the visit of the English traveller Brydone in 1770, "a clear-headed little sensible old man," the writer has recorded; "although he is considerably upwards of ninety, he retains all the faculties of his mind in perfection": he died however three years after this visit. His portrait in mosaic by the artist Favray is the principal feature in this monument. The walls of the nave, we may here remark, were inlaid with green marble at the expense of G. M. Nicholas Cottoner, 1663, and the general character of the ornamentation is of a Spanish style, white on a gold ground, but in each chapel the design is varied with reference to the heraldic insignia of the langue to which the shrine specially appertained, or to the benefactor at whose cost the decoration was carried out. Thus the cotton tree of Cottoner and the pears of Perellos are eminently conspicuous, while the crowned dolphin of Auvergne, and the double-headed German eagle designate the respective oratories of these langues. With more than questionable taste the French Government was permitted to hack off the richly floreated surface of the chapel of France, in which the handsome modern effigy of Count de Beaujolais (brother of Louis Philippe) has been erected, and to substitute little crosses and fleur-de-lys stuck upon a plain surface of stone.

Next to the chapel of St. James is a transept merely used as a vestibule from the corridor which leads to the Campo Santo and the Strada St. Lucia; crossing this, we enter the chapel of St. John, or of the langue of Aragon. Here are some of the most superb of the princely memorials of the rulers of the Order. Bernini's two statues, the Asiatic and the African, in chains, which remind one of Southey's description of the throne in Padalon where

> "Human forms sustained its ponderous weight
> With lifted hands outspread, and shoulders bowed
> Bending beneath their load,"

High Altar, St. John's Church, Valletta.

are copies, we know, of two grand bronze originals by John of Bologna, but in wealth of decoration, pictorial and statuesque, the whole chapel can hardly be surpassed. Beyond it lies the chapel of Auvergne or Saint Sebastian, and last upon this side is the chapel of our Lady of Philermos, so called from a miraculous icon now at St. Petersburg. Here are the famous silver rails, which in 1752 cost £800, being the votive offering of one-fifth of the personal property of two of the Knights. By the Statutes of the Order, Grand Masters on their election, and all Knights on their promotion to higher rank, were bound to present to the Conventual Church a valuable gift of some kind, figuratively spoken of as a Gioja or Bijou. Hence are derived these costly decorative ornaments lavished upon the great Church, the portable part of which became the spoil of the rapacious French in 1798. Sir Ferdinand Inglott, the late Post-master-General of Malta, pithily observes: "A few objects were left, deemed indispensable for the services. These objects are still to be seen in the empty presses of the Church Treasury, provoking specimens of past marvellous magnificence, of which the Temple was sacrilegiously deprived." Although the rails in this chapel escaped the clutches of the plunderer from the happy thought of concealing them under a coat of paint, yet the historian of the *Expédition Française en Egypte* states that the sanctuary lamp and chain taken from the chapel of Notre Dame de Philermos, of solid gold weighing 1,840 ounces, were first converted into ingots at the camp, and afterwards coined into zecchins at Cairo." The keys which hang in this chapel are not, as usually described, those of Jerusalem and Rhodes, but actually of Patras, Passava, Lepanto, and Anameta, places once under the dominion of the Knights.

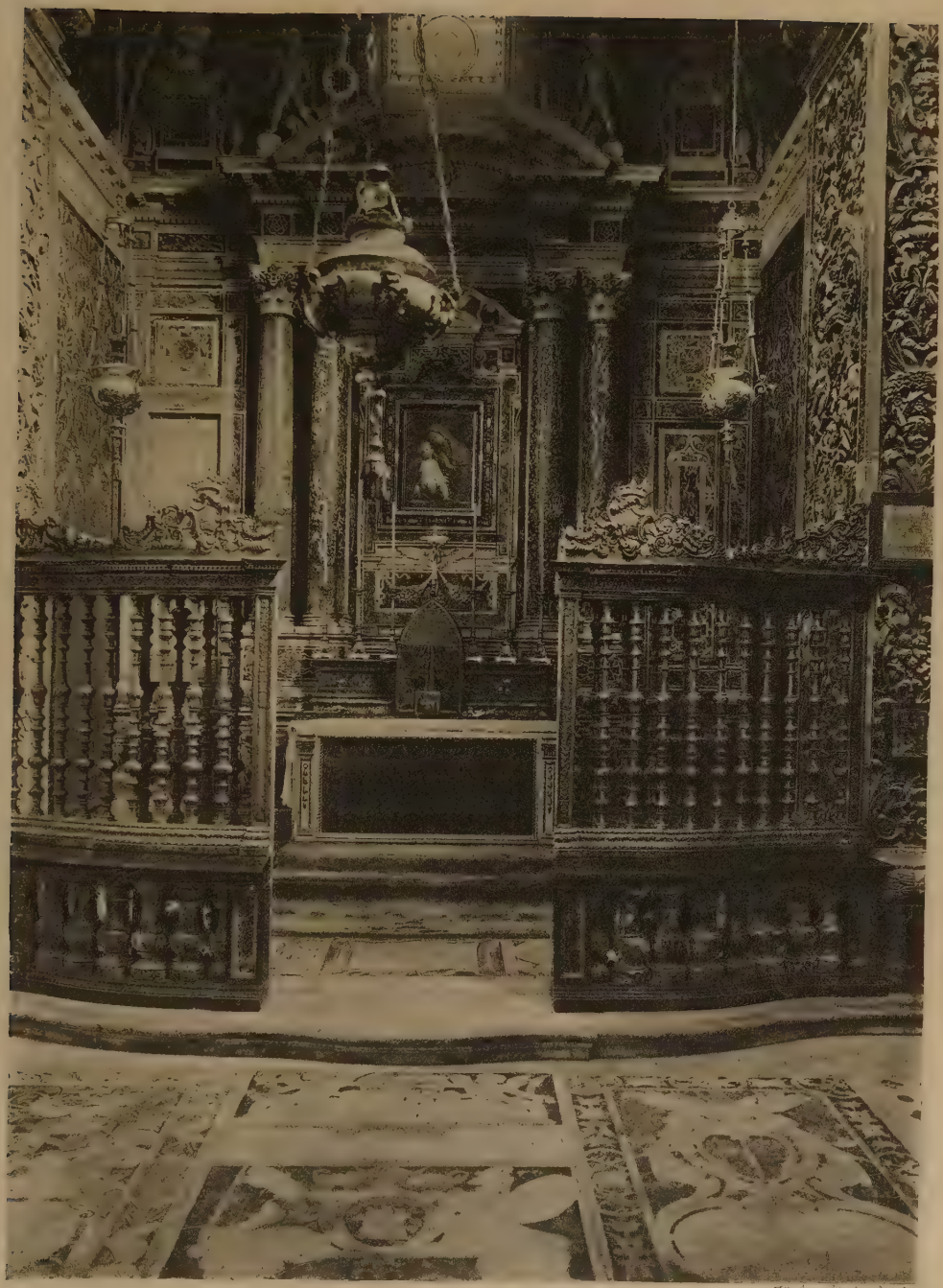
Our tour of the Church has now brought us to the High Altar of lapis lazuli and precious marbles, with its furniture of magnificent silver candlesticks and lamps. Of finer workmanship, if of less costly material, is a very elegant bronze eagle with the arms of Lorraine upon it, in the style of Jean Goujon, presented in 1557 by the Grand Prior Francis of Lorraine. Behind the altar, in an apse, is the representation of the Baptism of our Lord by St. John, sculptured in white marble by the Maltese, Melchior Gafa; it was not finished by him, and was placed here after his death in 1714. On either side the sanctuary are two seats under crimson baldaquins, one for the representative of Queen Victoria, the

other for the (titular) Archbishop of Rhodes, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Malta. It must not however be forgotten that St. John's is not his cathedral church—that being situate at the ancient capital Notabile—but the conventual church of the Order of St. John.

The crypt below the choir contains the most interesting of the memorials of the Grand Masters ; among the twelve whose tombstones occupy its floor and walls, are L'Isle Adam, the first to take possession of Malta, and the hero of the siege, La Vallette. Oliver Starkey, secretary to the latter, lies at his patron's feet, the only Knight not a Grand Master honoured with sepulture here.

Returning to the upper world in the chapel of St. Carlo, the eastern-most on the north side of the choir, appropriated in 1784 to that revived Anglo-Bavarian langue which G. M. de Rohan endeavoured to establish, there is one very interesting relic of antiquity, more illustrious in its past associations than for any beauty—the wooden statue of St. John, which was the figure-head of the galley in which L'Isle Adam entered the port of St. Angelo, and thereafter occupied a like position on the flagship of succeeding Grand Masters. The chapel of Provence, St. Michael's, contains the monuments of two Grand Masters, one of whom, de Lascaris, who died 1657, derived his descent from a quasi-royal house in the Riviera, and was a lineal representative of the Greek fugitive whose aid was of such value to the Knights in the siege of 1565.

Had not the French chapel been so barbarously disfigured, it would have been one of the most worthy of notice, containing as it does the monuments of the princely de Vignacourts and de Rohan, besides the modern one to Count Beaujolais. At the foot of de Rohan's grave lie the bones of his niece (the only female interred in the church), by the authority of Sir Thomas Maitland—during whose autocracy the good old lady died. This chapel is dedicated to St. Paul, as the next, or Italian chapel, is to St. Catherine, in which is the monument of G. M. Carraffa. The German chapel bears the dedication of the Magi, the three kings of Cologne, and we next come to the entrance of the Sacristy. Robbed as the church has been of many of its treasures, there are still some ecclesiastical vessels of valuable material and fine workmanship preserved here ; also many beautiful and ancient pieces of



Walter Lewis, Pinx.ᵗ

The Chapel of Our Lady of Philermos in S.ᵗ Johns Church Malta.

The Crypt of St. John's Church, Malta.

embroidery, one piece in particular representing a miraculous repulse of the Turks in an attack on Città Vecchia in 1470; and some truly

The French Chapel, St. John's Church, Malta.

splendid robes of former Grand Masters, a delight to connoisseurs in embroidery. The beautifully illuminated service books, twenty-two in

all, of various dates from the commencement of the sixteenth to the close of the seventeenth century, are full of historical and artistic value.

Tomb of the Grand Master Carraffa.

The arms, devices, and mottoes of L'Isle Adam, Lascaris, Paula, and Carraffa, with others, decorate these books.

St. Paul.

St. Andrew.

Tapestries in St. John's Church, Malta.

One might linger for days over these relics of the past, and yet find new matter for admiration and reflection. The marbles below your feet, which glisten during a scirocco wind as if newly polished, are themselves a constant source of interesting observation; fantastic taste has run riot in some of them, and the skeleton figures of which the artists were so fond are in all the grotesque attitudes of a mediæval dance of death. There are paintings, too, of no inconsiderable merit, which repay inspection, though all but smothered in the splendour of their setting.

The crowning embellishment of the church is, however, rarely visible to an English eye. It is the grand tapestry, the present of the Grand Master Perellos (1697), which he had prepared, under the direction of the painter Preti, by the eminent Flemish *tapissiers* the brothers de Vos of Brussels, expressly to fit into the proportions and to harmonise with the decorations of the Conventual Church. The suite consists of fourteen large pieces, 20 × 22 feet each, and the same number of narrow pieces, 6 × 22 feet, with an additional panel containing the portrait of the donor himself, attended by two allegorical figures, one personifying Charity as an angel distributing alms to the poor, the other Victory, in full armour, trampling, sword in hand, on the Moslem enemy prostrate and in chains: this hung over the west entrance, flanked on right and left by two of the panels *en grisaille* containing figures of the apostles Jude and Simon. The *grisailles* are the narrow pieces already mentioned, exactly corresponding to the dimensions of the piers of the nave, each with the figure, treated as a statue in stone-colour, of one of the eleven Apostles, the Apostle Paul, the Virgin Mary, and our Saviour, making altogether the fourteen figures. They divide the large subject-pictures which are hung across the arches at the entrance of each of the lateral chapels, and constitute a serial history of the progress of Christianity in connection with the Papal Church. The splendour of their colouring is quite in harmony with the brilliancy of the roof above and the pavement below; twelve of the fourteen are unquestionably taken from pictures by Rubens, some of which are in Brussels still, some at the Louvre, some at Madrid; the remaining two are conjectured to be from originals by Nicholas Poussin. The large panels are arranged as pictures in highly

enriched frames, on each one of which appear the arms of Perellos—three pears quartered, as Grand Master, by the cross of the Order. The same escutcheon occupies the lower half of the narrow panels, with a trophy of arms surrounding it. It seems almost incredible that the whole of this great work should have been executed in less than three years, the tapestry having been placed in the church on February 7th, 1701. In order to expedite their completion it would seem that the manufacturer, Josse or Jodocus de Vos, was compelled to entrust portions of them, or even entire tapestries, to other looms, to be executed in separate portions and joined together ; this haste somewhat impaired the beauty and symmetry of the work : in some of the *grisailles* for instance, a shadow is abruptly cut off and made to fall in a different direction. The proportions of some of the figures are distorted, and marks of junction are traceable occasionally throughout, but as a whole they are an extraordinary and majestic series. A distinguished native virtuoso, now no more, printed during the past year his ideas upon the subject of the design and arrangement of these fine works of art ; according to Sir F. Inglott they depict, as just suggested, the scheme of the Catholic Church, and they were arranged in pairs to carry on by correspondence the dogmatic teaching of the Roman theologians. The first pair of subjects are the Annunciation, and the Four Evangelists, by whom the good news was made known to mankind : next we have the Incarnation of the Saviour and the Adoration of the Magi opposite to it : the third pair (Poussin's) being the Entry into Jerusalem, and the Last Supper. The fourth pair, the Calvary and the Resurrection, are from two of Rubens' best known works. In the next pair we enter on ecclesiastical symbolism, the one being the institution of the Feast of Corpus Domini by Pope Urban IV., bearing a great resemblance to the famous work of Raphael at the Vatican, known as *La Disputa del Sacramento ;* and its fellow being the Triumph of Charity—a thoroughly Rubenesque work. Charity is represented in a golden car, drawn by lions, and two celestial beings are depicted as burning writhing vipers, the emblems of human hatred, strife, and contention. The two next allegories, also magnificent compositions, are the Triumph of the Church and the Triumph of Faith : and the series closes with Time unveiling Truth, and the most elaborate

Tapestry in St John's Church.—The Last Supper.

Tapestry in St. John's Church.—The Triumph of Charity, after Rubens.

and spirited of all the compositions, representing the Destruction of Idolatry.

About twelve years ago "it was discovered that all the light and clear-coloured portions of the tapestries which were woven in silk were utterly ruined, the silk crumbling to dust at the touch; and thus the necessity for their being rewoven was imminent. In some cases this destruction only affected the lights in the hair or the beards, or a portion of the draperies, but in other cases the ruin was more widely spread, and the whole of the drapery had to be renewed, and even in the case of some of the brown and deeper colours which are in wool, these also were found to be in equally ruined condition, and their renewal to be as much necessary as in the case of the silk." It need hardly be added that the then Chief Secretary, Sir Victor Houlton, from whom the last sentence is quoted, did not allow this state of things to continue. An expert, Chevalier Palmieri of Naples, was employed to repair the fabric, and some doubts having been expressed as to the mode of restoration adopted, M. Darcel, the Director of the Gobelins factory, visited Malta, and in an interesting report, in which many facts about the history of the tapestry were elicited, pronounced in favour of the reparation.

In 1887 the repair of the tapestry was completed at an expense of £3,000 to Government, and it was handed back to the Chapter of the Conventual Church, to remain unseen and untouched for eleven months in the year, and to be brought out for a few days in June only. As in a Maltese June the visitors have left, the fleet has departed for its summer cruise, every officer who can obtain leave is on furlough, passers-by are rare, and even the chief native families frequently leave the island, it does seem unfortunate that these valuable works of art, upon which so large a sum of public money has been well spent, should be relegated to the dank shade of obscurity. If at Christmas, when the church is swathed in tasteless red hangings, these beautiful pictures were displayed, they would be admired and commented on by artist and amateur alike, as the similar gifts of Perellos in the council chamber of the Palace are now.

IV

VALLETTA

It is quite impossible to convey by any effort of word-painting the impression produced by the first sight of the city of Valletta from the sea, sweeping down by terraces from the summit of the rock, "the high walls, the houses rising one above the other, the arches of the two Baraccas, the three cities on the opposite side of the harbour, with Fort Ricasoli, St. Angelo, and the fortifications of Florian, the creeks with the merchant vessels and ships of war lying at anchor, and the walls of Cottonera form altogether a *coup d'œil* of a very imposing character." A writer in the *Quarterly Review* many years ago called it a picture which can scarce be paralleled in the world.

This is not much dissimilar to the opinion of the late Lord Beaconsfield: "If that fair Valletta, with its streets of palaces, its picturesque forts and magnificent church, only crowned some green and azure island of the Ionian Sea, Corfu, for instance, I really think that the ideal of landscapes would be realized." It has a beauty also, beyond the external symmetry and magnificence which it presents, the beauty of suggestion, tempting you to the study of its history, and repaying in ample abundance any pains which you take to investigate it.

Valletta proper is not an ancient city, by comparison at least with other famous places of pilgrimage. It was only projected in 1565, and St. John's was not finished until 1577, while during the latter part of the seventeenth and nearly all the eighteenth century successive Grand Masters in turn each modernized his predecessor's work. To talk of the Auberge de Castile "echoing to the mailed tread of the Castilian," is mere misleading verbiage. The Auberges are stately Italian palaces, more modern than St. James's or Hampton Court, the churches florid

renaissance, with no more Gothic about them than St. Paul's, the forts English redoubts of our grandsires' time. The French, too, during their happily brief occupation, not only looted with persistent cupidity, but recklessly destroyed any armorial mementos of the rule of the Order. Nor have the proceedings of the English Government been always as correct in point of taste as in intention. To remove statues from the position to which they belonged for the sake of adorning another public place, is a falsification of history which carries with it its own condemnation. Yet the lover of the picturesque and romantic cannot fail to admire the trophy-capital of the Knights of St. John.

It is indeed essentially a chivalrous city, interpenetrated with the legends of the history of the Order. When a fine building presents itself and you ask its name, it is probably an auberge, one of the barracks of the seven langues. Of these the finest, that belonging to the langue of Castile, is the mess-room and quarters of the officers of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers ; the Auberge d'Italie in the Strada Mercanti, nearly opposite, being the office of the latter corps. This plain, well-proportioned building, has on its front the bust of G. M. Carraffa, 1680, in a florid trophy of white marble, and in the court-yard, round which it is built, is an elegant stone arch over a well, which bears the same Grand Master's arms. These two auberges are situated in the upper part of the city near the Porto Reale, the only exit to the country. Not far off, in the Strada Reale, the main street, is the Auberge de Provence, occupied at present as the Union Club. With a plain *façade*, this building internally contains a fine suite of stately apartments, including a spacious ball-room (one of the two with floors of wood which the city can boast, the saloons and corridors of the palaces being all stone), gaily decorated with arabesques by an Italian artist in the early part of the present century, when it was appropriated to its modern purpose. It was the scene of the entertainment given by the garrison to Sir Walter Scott, on the occasion of his visit in 1831, when he remarks that he had some difficulty in escaping a mimic coronation with laurel by some local poetaster. A little lower down the street is the Auberge d'Auvergne, now appropriated to the Courts of Justice. The Auberge de France which stands at the head of Strada Forni (the bake-house street), where

the ovens of the Knights still supply the needs of the garrison, though spacious, has nothing in its architecture worth notice, and the same may be said of the Auberge d'Aragon, now the official residence of the general commanding the garrison. Close to this building stood the Auberge of Germany, which was pulled down when the English church was built at the foot of Strada Vescovo, as the Auberge d'Inghilterra, a small building suited to the moribund condition of the English langue at the time of the foundation of the city, was, when the handsome Opera House was erected after the design of Mr. Barry in 1861. Not far from the Auberge d'Aragon, in the same north-western quarter of the city, looking over the entrance to the Marsamuscetto harbour from an elevated rampart—under which is the curious subterranean entrance known as the Jews' sally-port, from this part of Valletta having been appropriated as a Ghetto—stands the handsome building generally styled the Baviere, the officers' quarters for the regiment stationed in Fort St. Elmo, but originally erected for that Anglo-Bavarian langue which the Grand Master de Rohan endeavoured to found in 1784, and to which he united the Grand Priory of Poland.

In mentioning subterranean communications, one must not be forgotten, which is often talked of but seldom visited, called the Manderaggio, a word which means a "place for cattle." Disembarking at the stairs in the quarantine harbour, and passing towards the centre of the city through the bustling Strada St. Marco, a doorway on the left may excite the wayfarer's attention from its evidently leading into a public stair or steep alley, while a little further on a wider open street runs down a declivity to a level apparently lower than that of the pier at which you have just landed. In fact this small portion of the town is an excavation in the lowest level of the promontory, intended to be used as a dock for the warships of the Order, and after that purpose was abandoned, occupied by the poorer class of work-people, to whom the recommendation of being close to their work outweighs the drawbacks of the closely-packed, ill-drained alleys and cellars in which they herd. It is however only fair to observe that the death-rate of this district is not exceptionally high, nor are the houses, though foul and damp, reduced to that sordid disrepair which would be the case in similar situations in London or New York. All Maltese houses are solid, stone being the

cheapest, and wood the dearer material. The climate also makes cool and even damp positions less injurious to health than in a more temperate zone, and probably the greatest hardship of the denizens of the Manderaggio is want of free circulation of air. Many projects have been formed by successive Governments for transplanting the residents in the Manderaggio, and utilising the site, but none have been found at present feasible; one great obstacle in the way being the steady increase in

Marsamuscetto Harbour, Malta. Drawn by R. Serle.

population, which threatens ere long to constitute one of the most serious problems with which the rulers of the country will have to cope. Five and twenty years ago there were 1,248 human beings to every square mile in Malta, and the increase has become extremely serious, ten per cent., it is alleged, annually since that date. It is true that the Maltese is to be found in every country that borders on the Mediterranean, and even farther afield, where a livelihood is to be made, but, like the

Chinaman, he desires to lay his bones at home, and having saved a small sum will invest it in buying or building a house in Sliema or San Giuseppe, or some other suburb of his beloved Valletta.

But to return to the Fior del Mondo. Had the original plan of the architect been carried out, the city would really have had an air of symmetry almost too regular. Under existing circumstances, although the streets are all at right angles, yet the inequalities on the surface of the promontory throw them into all kinds of varied perspective, and give to the whole mass a pyramidal effect which is very striking. The two highest elevations are the part of the Strada Reale between the Palace Square and the Main Gate, and the garden with its arcaded, though unroofed promenades, known as the Upper Baracca, from which the finest panorama of the Grand Harbour is obtained. At one end of this spacious elevated terrace you may look down into the vast fosse cut through the solid rock from bay to bay by the labour of thousands of Turkish slaves. Beyond is the suburb of Floriana, and in the distance the heights of Città Vecchia and the Bingemma hills, a landscape which reminds some of the visitors to these shores of the Holy Land. On the other side of the harbour, at your feet, are the twin promontories of St. Angelo and Isola, with the Admiralty creek between them crowded with British shipping, men-of-war, troopships, yachts, and merchantmen, while hundreds of *dghaisas* (native boats), and small craft of every description carry on an incessant traffic. At the other end you look across the lower Baracca, with the monument to Sir Alexander Ball, to Fort Ricasoli and the entrance to the harbour; nor must the Naval Hospital on the Bighi point be forgotten, where Napoleon announced his intention, when he had subdued England, of erecting his palace, that he might control Europe with the one hand, and India with the other.

The stately range of arches called Baracca was roofed and enlarged at the expense of Fra Balbiani, Prior of Messina in 1661—English engravings of it in that state subsequent to 1760 are extant; but in 1775, having been the rendezvous of the members of a formidable conspiracy, the roof was destroyed by order of the Grand Master. The garden contains the monument of Sir Thomas Maitland, Governor from 1813 to 1824. Passing from hence between the Castile and the fort called St. James'

Cavalier, a garrison chapel and a gymnasium being close at hand, and turning down the Strada Mercanti past the "Italie" gateway, there stands on the opposite side of the road the present Post Office, formerly the Palazzo Parisio, occupied by Napoleon I. as his headquarters when in the island. The recess where his bed was placed, is still traditionally identified, and the late Postmaster remembered his father having related that as the dishes for the General's dinner were brought up to his room, the sentinel, with Republican equality, helped himself to a portion of one which took his fancy, much to the amazement of the young Maltese. At the corner of this street and S. Giovanni, is a handsomely ornamented building, which, rebuilt and adorned by Grand Master Pinto, was used as the Courts of Justice. At the junction of the two streets the corner is cut away and a pedestal or pillar, large enough for a single person to stand upon, occupies its place, a large iron hook projecting above. This was used for the punishment of the *strappado*, the criminal being made to stand on the pillar, and be hoisted by the arms by a rope from the hook. Popular legend asserts that a bankrupt might obtain a discharge from his debts by volunteering to undergo this penalty, if a creditor chose to exact it. On the doors of this building, now a High School for Girls, are a beautiful pair of brass knockers adorned with the armorial bearings of G. M. Pinto. Nowhere is this style of decoration more general than in Valletta. The favourite pattern is very elegant—a dolphin, beautifully modelled, and still manufactured by the metal workers, whose shops are in Strada Irlandese near the lower Baracca. In Strada Mercanti, a little lower down, there were upon the doors of the "Archives," then the Post Office, a superb pair, so much above the common size, that a classical postmaster insisted that they represented the "Balæna Britannica delphinis major." At one time the lady of the outgoing holder of the office was returning to England, and from "information received," as the police are in the habit of saying, she was favoured with a polite message from the Governor to the effect that she would not be allowed to depart until an article of Government property, one of the knockers of the gates, was restored to its place. She no doubt had anticipated that if she could only get it safely to London, it would adorn her own street-door, for there are a few of similar construction on houses in Mayfair and Belgravia.

Strada Mercanti is indeed a kind of epitome of life in Malta. In the vicinity of the market from which the street takes its name—a modern, convenient, and well-ordered building—may be seen specimens of every class of the population, native and visitor. Ships' cooks, caterers for messes, clubs, and hotels, with native representatives of every grade from the palace to the cottage. Outside, an open air collection of stalls offering second-hand goods of every description, besieged by a motley crowd of Greeks, Arabs, Negroes, &c., from the merchant vessels in harbour, every one chaffering in his own language, and traders, porters, and idlers generally, shouting at the top of their voices in guttural vernacular chorus. Greater interest however attaches to the seaward end of this street, for it is here that the great hospital of the Order still subsists in the original building, though improved by modern science, which was erected for the service of the sick in 1575.

When the Knights arrived on the island they found an ancient hospital at Città Vecchia. This having been entirely rebuilt and reorganized by G. M. Manoel del Vilhena, is now used for the accommodation of a small number of patients, under the title of Santo Spirito. As St. Angelo was henceforth to be the *chef lieu* of the Order a hospital was erected in the Borgo, of which the doorway still remains, the building being now a nunnery. In the chapel however there is an interesting painting dated 1557, with the arms of L'Isle Adam and the date of the foundation, 1533. On the completion of the new city this hospital was transferred to the other side of the harbour, and unfortunately placed on the south-eastern sea front close to the great harbour, the inducement no doubt to choose this site being that patients might be landed from ships at the mouth of the harbour, and brought in by a covered way below the sea wall into the lower ward of the hospital, without making a tedious and dangerous circuit of the streets. Unfortunately it is thus completely sheltered by the high ground behind it from the healthy north and north-west winds, while it is exposed to the enervating scirocco.

This is much to be regretted, as the great ward is a stupendous piece of architectural skill. It is 503 ft. in length internally, 34 ft. 10 in. in width, and 30 ft. 6 in. in height—one of the grandest interiors in the world. There is another apartment at right angles, forming part of the

same great hall, but now divided, as is the hall itself, by party-walls about 12 ft. high. All down the sea side of the apartment are little niches, one to every pair of beds, originally intended for latrines. Up

Knights Hospitallers, from an Engraving in "Statutes of the Order of St. John," translated by Bogoforte, 1676.

to 1863 the windows were very small, occupying only a fifteenth of the space proportionate to the contents of the hall. Even now the apartment is very dismal, and we no longer hang the walls with tapestry and

pictures, as the Knights did by way of relieving the monotony of the prospect. The soldiers dislike and dread to be sent there, and we ought to have a military hospital in a better situation.

But the fault lay in the ignorance of true sanitary science which prevailed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1662, and again in 1712 under Perellos, large sums were spent upon the improvement of the hospital, but the erection of a front quadrangle facing Strada Mercanti, at an elevation of thirty-five feet above the existing one, shut out more completely air and light from the buildings on the lower level, and in 1780 a very injudicious addition of some rooms, afterwards used as Government stores, was made. Howard visited it in 1786 and speaks with much disfavour of the management; the servants were dirty, inhuman wretches, the beds not clean, the plate—for the hospital was supposed to be served on silver, only the *gente di catena*, the malefactors or galley slaves, condescending to pewter—badly kept, and the number of attendants below the stated staff. Possibly the Grand Hospitaller, who was always a Knight of the French langue, may have been at that time inefficient; for it is suggestive that every five years, the period for which the Knight who had been nominated was bound to serve, a change in the office took place. Yet we cannot believe that there was actual parsimony. In 1796 the Order were expending £6,000 a year on their hospital, when the purchasing power of money infinitely exceeded anything which we can find a parallel for. Nor at the present day does there appear to be any reluctance upon the part of the Maltese to make ample provision for the sick. The Civil Hospital, now wisely removed to a healthy site in the suburb of Floriana, is admirably conducted, and no fault save that of position can be found with the Hospital for Incurables, hard by the Military Hospital. It is beneath this building, which adjoins the burying-place of the Knights who died in hospital, and who were buried in their mantles *à bec*, with the white cross, that the singular piece of ghastly ingenuity, the Chapel of Bones, is situate, every detail of the architecture being rendered in the bleached remains of humanity. Almost as singular a relic is the mortuary where the body is left for twenty-four hours after death with straps fastened to hands and feet, so that the slightest motion would set a bell ringing and prevent the catastrophe of a living interment.

V

VALLETTA (continued)

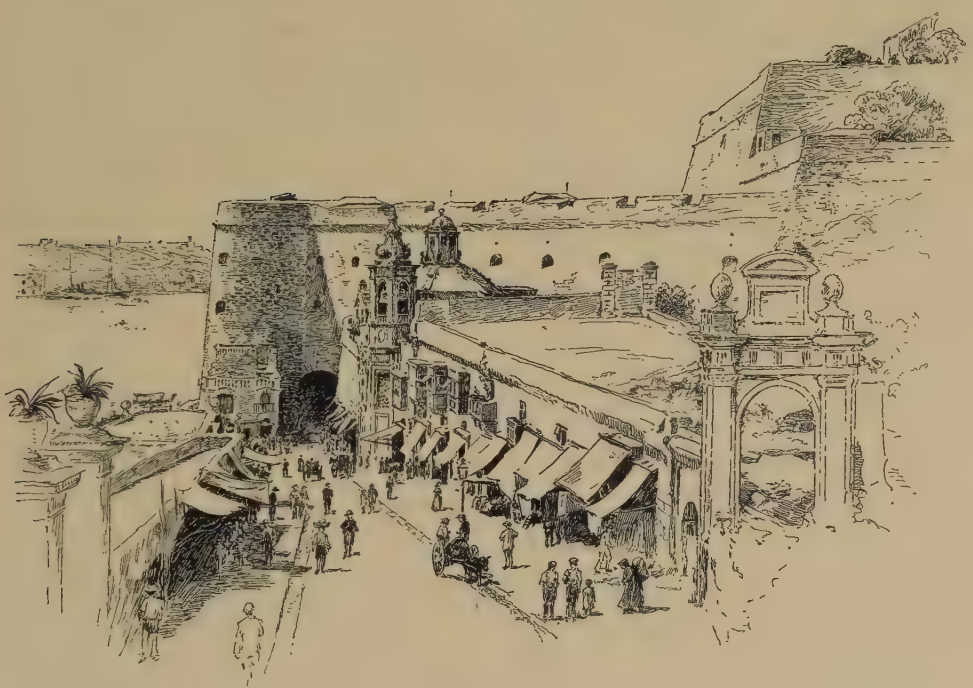
It is to Spanish influence that Valletta owes the leading characteristic of its architecture, the balconies which project from every house, forming an integral part of its construction, roofed in, and provided with windows and blinds for the purpose of intercepting the rays of the sun, and of controlling the currents of air which in sultry days are admitted to refresh the interior apartment. They are indeed the Spanish *miradores*, a modification of the Oriental *moncharbis*, supported upon solid brackets of stone and closed with gratings. In traversing the streets which lead to the centre of the town, the steep incline of Strada Vescovo from the quarantine harbour, or the streets of stairs upon the other side, these balconies present a broken outline of the most varied character, the street itself bathed in shadow with bars of light breaking in at the intersecting thoroughfares; the gloomy shops and basements darkened by awnings or deep projections; statues of saints, foreshortened by their elevated position, hang suspended overhead with lighted lamps burning in front of them, while higher still the bright sunshine brings out in strong relief the cream-coloured upper stories of the buildings against the azure sky. As you pursue your way you notice the vaulted vestibules admitting to the court-yards of mansions, sometimes closed by folding doors with a wicket for entrance, sometimes by a high wooden gate, the object of which is to keep out the goats, a flock of which creatures may often be seen dawdling down the streets, supplementing the scanty forage they can find on the ramparts, by nibbling orange peel, old newspapers, or any refuse they espy. Behind them comes their herdsman in half seafaring guise, with bare feet, sash, long drooping knitted cap, shirt-sleeves, and a bag, for the most part empty, over one shoulder, who will suddenly pounce upon a goat, catch it by the hind leg, and milk it deftly into the can which some maidservant has just

handed to him. These are the touches of nature which make daily life in Malta so amusing. The plan of a Maltese town house is this: a corridor leading to the street, a court-yard, sometimes planted with flowers or shrubs, sometimes simply paved for kitchen purposes—always with a well—used or unused. At the back the kitchen and servants'

Strada Vescovo, Valletta. Drawn by R. Serle.

offices, the front rooms on the level of the street being generally let as shops, stables, anything, to a separate tenant. There is always a mezzanine floor also, with a distinct entrance and tenancy; these apartments have no chimneys or ventilation of any sort except from the front, and should any cooking be required by their occupants it is

done by a little square stone oven brought out into the balcony or the pavement, filled with charcoal and lighted *sub dio*, the fumes ascending to the apartments above, which, approached by a broad handsome stairway, are often palatial in dimensions, on an average eighteen feet high, and all with stone floors. All the wood in a house in Valletta, except window cases, shutters, and doors, is comprised in the massive beams which support these slabs of stone, so fires are very rare. The old Teatro Manoel, built by G. M. del Vilhena in 1732, is the oldest



Strada Marina, Valletta. Drawn by R. Serle.

theatre in Europe, every other, even the more modern Opera House in Valletta itself, having suffered from fire. The Opera, though the stage, the roof, and all the internal fittings were consumed in 1873, remains externally the same as when erected in 1866. The houses of Valletta have stone and concrete roofs also, upon which the occupants climb to take the air, and enjoy the lovely sea prospect to the northward in the most advantageous light with the sun behind them.

As ought to be the case, the palace is quite the typical mansion of the

city. The courts are large and beautifully adorned with trees and shrubs, on the ground floor are the printing establishment and other government offices, guard-rooms, and the like, and you wind up a wonderful circular stair of shallow steps, a careful restoration of the one which in 1788 elicited the eulogium of Howard, to the wide marble corridors and spacious saloons appropriated to the social functions presided over by the Queen's representative. Not that this story is altogether devoted to purposes of mere court pageantry or official dignity : the room in which the grand tapestry, designated *Tenture des Indes*, is placed, is used as the House of Assembly for the local Parliament, and resounds to the harangues of patriotic members who evince their nationality by using a foreign language, Italian—which also by a strange perversity has been retained in the Courts of Justice of the island. The commercial classes, the artizans, and the labourers, would much prefer the general use of English as a supplement to Maltese, and the discontinuance of Italian. Under present conditions the trilingual teaching in the schools deserves the highest commendation, and the ease with which it seems to be acquired, speaks strongly for the aptitude of the scholars ; but why a certain official patronage should be extended to an exotic tongue is difficult to understand. Whether a dialect of the old Punic tongue or a corrupt Arabic is the origin of the native language may perhaps be doubtful, but it would repay a more careful grammatical study.

Except for the beautiful hangings of its walls the council chamber is not a particularly imposing apartment, though of good proportions. A chair of state for the representative of Majesty, seats for the officials, and benches for the elected members, covered in orthodox crimson, constitute its furniture, with a few forms at the lower end for the public, who can gratify ear or eye *ad libitum*, and when tired of the discussion revert to the figures of birds and beasts, Indians, and Negroes, wrought in superb colouring into these triumphs of the skill of Le Blond, for their mental refreshment.

It would appear that G. M. Raymond de Perellos had a passion for tapestry, for having adorned the church of St. John with this kind of decoration made at Brussels, he repaired to the famous factory of Gobelins for tapestry for the palace. The panels represent exotic and rare South American plants and animals, the designs having been composed in the

school of Le Brun, the designer for the factory of the Gobelins, in the seventeenth century, from pictures given to Louis XIV by the Prince of

Tapestry in the Council Chamber.

Nassau. The cartoons, worn out by use, were renewed about 1725 by Francis Desportes, who modified and amplified some of them; several

versions of these favourite designs are known to exist, of which one is in the *Garde Meuble* of Paris, and is occasionally exhibited at the opening of the Salon in the Champs Elysées. The tapestry at Malta belongs, however, to the more ancient period, the name of the maker, Le Blond, is woven into the list, and on the border appear the arms of Perellos, while on a fringe, also worked in panels, apparently by the same hand, the arms are repeated with Turkish prisoners as supporters, no memorandum of such design being found by M. Darcel in the Archives, either of the factory or of the *Garde Meuble*. He surmises therefore that these tapestries were purchased by the Grand Master from Le Blond's private establishment, where he is known to have executed commissions from favourite patterns, sometimes those belonging to the Royal establishment, and sometimes his own property—the *Tenture des Indes* being one of these—woven outside the government factory, but from designs by the same artists, and probably with materials identical with those employed for the tapestry produced from the looms of the State. M. Darcel, in the interesting monograph which he has written upon these tapestries, comments very shrewdly upon the total ignorance often displayed on such subjects, mentioning one author upon Malta who uses for these hangings the words "*i damaschi effigiati*," the figured damasks: a blunder the more extraordinary because they are commonly known in Valletta as the Arazzi, from the town of Arras, the great seat of the manufacture, which as readers of Shakespeare will remember, gave them the same name in ordinary English parlance.

One of the prominent features of the palace is the armoury, a finely proportioned gallery, lined, as are the corridors, with effigies in suits of armour bearing pikes and round shields, upon which in questionable taste are painted the arms of the successive Grand Masters from Gerard to Hompesch, and of English Governors to the present day. The armour itself is poor, and of the least interesting period. There are a few suits of more elegant design in the saloons, one of which, richly inlaid with gold, belonged to G. M. de Vignacourt, of whom there is a fine portrait by Caravaggio. There is rather an interesting full length of Catherine II. of Russia, but the majority of the portraits and other paintings are of no very conspicuous merit.

The stands of arms are effective as a mass, from a decorative point

Tapestry in the Council Chamber.

of view, but in detail are not of great value or curiosity. The sword, axe, and coat of mail of the great enemy of the Knights, the corsair Dragut, are preserved in a case, and a few Oriental weapons are deserving of notice; a cannon made of copper, four inches in bore, covered with cement bound round with rope, is one of the most singular trophies, and there are other small pieces of artillery of ornamental workmanship preserved here. In 1888 the English Government restored to Malta certain cannon captured from the French, who had taken them from the island; these, which are of elegant design and ornamentation, were, for the most part, originally presented by foreign princes in token of amity, or by way of acknowledgment for hospitality or services rendered by the Order. They are placed in conspicuous situations in Valletta, and form, says a late visitor to Malta, popular hobby-horses for the ragged urchins of the town.

Communicating with the palace by a prolonged balcony of the construction already described, is the Public Library, to which the ordinary entrance is by a staircase from Victoria Square, now appropriately adorned by a statue of Her Most Gracious Majesty, replacing one of G. M. Manoel del Vilhena, which had been translated by Sir Gaspard Le Marchant from the fort which the Grand Master constructed and called by his own name, ignoring an inscription which stated that he stood in the midst of his works. The building was erected by G. M. de Rohan for a library, but was not used until 1812. The library itself dates from 1650, when a room in the building adjoining St. John's Church was set apart for the purpose, which appears to have been first contemplated nearly forty years before. In 1760 the books collected by Cardinal Portocarrero were bought for a public library by the Bailiff Tencin, and in 1763 a librarian was appointed; additions were also made from other libraries over which the Order had control, and from the private collections of its individual members, which by a resolution of the Chapter were directed to be handed over to the library, the duplicate books being sold to defray establishment expenses. Thus in 1812 there were 30,000 volumes to be placed on the new shelves, and since that date 20,000 more have been added. This does not, unfortunately, represent the actual state of the library, which we may regret to learn does

not reflect much credit upon the English Government. In 1881, when Dr. Vassalo, a learned, courteous, and in every way admirable librarian, had in the course of nature to leave his post, a very considerable percentage of the books were reduced to a condition not far removed from absolute powder by the ravages of the *agaricus* and other insect foes of literature. The sum allowed for dusting the books, taking each book in order, would suffice for a septennial cleansing; the floor of the large book-room, instead of marble, wood, or some material which resists wear and tear, was of the friable native stone, and the dust from the streets made its way through the casements; nor, said the authorities, was there a sufficient fund at hand to remedy this melancholy state of things. Dr. Vassalo's successor grappled to the best of his ability with the disastrous condition of his charge; large quantities of the volumes were committed to the flames, and the remaining works were fumigated and otherwise defended against the foe; fortunately the devastation had been chiefly confined to the upper shelves, the depository of the additions made from the libraries of bygone Knights, which, as Thackeray astutely noted when he passed through Malta, were "none of your works of modern science, travel, and history, but good old useless books of the last two centuries"; but the pest was fast spreading to works of far more interest and value, so that even now, when matters are certainly in a greatly improved condition, one asks for an ancient chronicle, or a fine specimen of typography or binding, with fear and trembling. When we consider that the outlay of a few hundred pounds, and a comparatively simple rearrangement of premises by no means inadequate for their purpose, would convert this into one of the most interesting and handsome museums in the world, one cannot but regret that local aversion to change, and the short tenure of the office of Governor, which prevents many plans from being brought to fruition which have been commenced in a true spirit of conservative reform, should have stood in the way of a thorough renovation of a most interesting inheritance of the past.

It is at the back of this building that the small museum is located in two or three minor apartments. Small as it is, however, it con-

tains many objects of great value and rarity, forming an epitome of the history of the islands of Malta and Gozo. In addition to the remains of the Phœnician period of which mention has been already made, there are several pieces of pottery, vases, bowls, and lamps: there is also a most interesting terra-cotta sarcophagus of that period, found with a skeleton inside, and an iron ring, at Ghar Barca in 1797. In the same locality similar discoveries are recorded to have been made in 1624 and 1800; and fictile relics have been at times

Roman Sculpture.—Romulus and Remus. In the Museum at Valietta.

unearthed in other places which found their way into private hands, and have been lost sight of. The suggestion cannot fail to present itself that if the museum were a little more *en évidence*, public interest in it might be aroused, and some of the treasures now in private houses find their way into the national collection. The late Dr. Vassalo printed a very readable and accurate description of the contents of the museum, classifying them according to the period and region of art to which they belonged. From Phœnician and Egyptian, we come to the Greek and Roman periods; of the former, the curious Sicilian altar with the three bended legs familiar as the ensign of the Isle of Man, but with the

addition of a human face in the centre of them ; a beautifully sculptured miniature Hercules ; several vases with figures in the Etruscan style round the bowl—of the latter the fine she-wolf with the children, of pure alabaster, are very noteworthy ; also a great variety of lamps and articles of pottery bearing Christian emblems, and the remarkable bronze statuette of a crippled beggar holding a dish and bearing on his body curious letters, said to be of the mystic alphabet in vogue among the Gnostic heretics, and read thus, "Christ was scourged." Of the Norman period there is only a capital from a small column, formerly part of a well in the

Norman Capital, and Greek Vase.

Figure with Gnostic Inscription.

In the Museum at Valletta.

Borgo, and a very curious and interesting Saracenic inscription of the eleventh century, cut upon the back of a piece of marble which had formed, it would appear from the remains of the carving on the reverse side, a portion of some ornament of a classical building. The masks, taken after death, of L'Isle Adam and La Vallette, have found an appropriate resting-place here, and the dies for the coinage of the three last Grand Masters conclude the representative tale of centuries. The very handsome majolica vases once used in the Knights' Hospital are not deposited, as one would expect, in the museum, but in the armoury and corridors of the palace. They are very quaint in design and some are of great beauty ; one of the most singular stands quite three feet in height, and is made to represent an owl with ears and beak, the head taking off for a lid.

In cases in the main library are preserved some of the most valuable

printed books, old editions curious in woodcuts like Cavorsin's siege of Rhodes, &c.; also some beautifully written and illuminated MS. books with splendid artistic and elaborate specimens of binding, generally presentations to Grand Masters; there are other MSS., heraldic, &c., and engravings of Malta in former days, recently acquired.

A collection of fossils in the same great hall seems less in place here than it would be at the University in Strada S. Paolo, where the higher education of the place is very efficiently carried out, the only matter of regret being that of the numerous young men annually qualified in law and medicine a small proportion only can possibly find employment in so limited a sphere. The managing body of the institution however wisely seek to elevate the popular taste generally by lectures upon history, geography, the rudiments of science, &c., and do a good work outside their walls as well as within them.

In the educational language of the day, the elementary schools of the island may be classed as "efficient, but not sufficient." They do not possess accommodation for those of the population who would voluntarily attend them, and anything like compulsory attendance would necessitate an enlargement to triple the present available space. At the same time, for those fortunate enough to obtain it, the instruction is sound and intelligent, and the discipline admirable. One of the prettiest sights in Valletta is to visit the model school in the Strada Cristofero, where the ancient slave and civil prisons, of which Howard has left us a melancholy account, are now tenanted by little learners as bright, clean, and happy as those whom Thackeray saw and heard at Dundalk, and described so touchingly in his *Irish Sketch-book*. If an English visitor to Malta really wishes to do good, let him obtain permission from the Director of Education to visit these schools, which, I doubt not, he will find doing the same good work as in '91, and by whose conductors a slight encouragement from England is highly appreciated.

The religious susceptibilities of the natives are sometimes the occasion of external manifestation of distaste or misunderstanding, as a worthy chaplain to the forces once discovered who excited vehement wrath in the breast of a boatman by telling him that the figure of Neptune upon his *dghaisa* was the god of the sea. Like all primitive races the islanders are deeply attached to their national usages, for which perhaps

our own countrymen sometimes display a want of consideration. One of the most remarkable features of the city is the peculiar mantilla of black silk worn by the women which is called the *faldette* or sometimes the *onega*. It is in the shape of a skirt turned over the head, which was no doubt its origin, but gathered in on one side only and kept stiff by an arched pièce of whalebone, which can be managed ingeniously by the hand so as to give the nun-like effect which strikes the visitor as so remarkable. This is connected with some religious scruple; the ladies of the first fashion wear it on certain occasions of devotion, and a servant going to England with her employer's family will go on board the packet wearing it and commit it to the care of a friend to take ashore, who will meet her with it on her return. It is most probable however that the colour, not the shape, was really the subject of the vow. In the country it is worn of ordinary stuff, and called *tsolkâna*, resembling in fact an Arab garment of somewhat similar name. Perhaps the only male piece of costume which can be called national is the *khorg*, a piece of cloth made into a bag about three yards long and two feet wide, with an opening in the middle and worn full or empty over the shoulder. This forms an invariable adjunct to the out-of-door costume of the labourer, who runs in to his work in Valletta from some *casal* perhaps half a dozen miles away. A large portion of this labour is employed in the coaling of steamers, and it is one of the sights of the harbour to watch the two streams of human ants running out from the depôts and back again from the boats, laden and empty. There may be some ground for fear, should the improvements in science in any way interfere with this employment by enabling steamers to coal less frequently, that an industrious race may suffer.

That the island could support a population increasing at the present rate, if deprived of the English expenditure, is quite impossible, the fertile ground being so small, consisting only of nooks and crannies. The pits in front of St. Elmo and on the rocky plain of Floriana, in which a store of corn is kept, covered in the antique style with round stones sealed and marked, evidence the necessity for an extraneous supply. It seems strange that in a community under British influence a duty on imported wheat should still be payable,

but it is the indisposition of the Maltese themselves to its abolition which retains the impost, nor can it be said that the price of bread has ever been so high as to cause any widespread distress as long as employment is plentiful; the wants of a native are few, and so modest is his expenditure that we still coin the "grain," a little copper piece, ten making a penny, which has been the common circulating medium ever since the era of the Grand Masters.

The effects of British rule are more in evidence on the other side of the Great Harbour, in what are called the three cities, Vittoriosa, Burmola, and Isola. On the point opposite the Knights' Hospital, Bighi, in the very place where Napoleon boastfully said he would build his palace when Europe, Asia, and Africa were all subjugated to his Empire, is the very spacious and beautiful Naval Hospital, erected in 1830, in digging the foundations of which Captain (afterwards Sir Harry) Smith, R.E., discovered the Egyptian inscriptions now in the British Museum. Here begin the defensive lines called Cottonera, after their founder, Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner, whose bust ornaments the Zabbar gate, the scene of some fighting during the French blockade, conspicuous from its lofty position. Here, in the airiest situation, stands the main military hospital, plain, large, and well-arranged. Vittoriosa, for so has the Borgo been entitled since the siege, is now one vast congeries of naval institutions; even the caves at the back of the Admiralty, where the wretched Mahometan galley-slaves dragged out a miserable existence, a suggestive trace of which is found in the appellation of the neighbouring creek, the Bay of Insects, are utilized for shops and stores. The suburb of Burmola, at the head of this creek, is densely peopled by workmen employed in the docks, which now are being enlarged on a suitable scale to the requirements of our Mediterranean headquarters. The third of these subsidiary towns, Isola or Senglea, is also now nearly as much a dockyard as the Admiralty Creek itself, and the buildings in all three, which were raised for the accommodation of the forces of the Knights, military and naval, have been modernised into or supplanted by barracks, quarters, and factories appropriated to the service of the British fleet and garrison. On the adjacent hill is a military and a civil prison, and government stores occupy the shore of the whole of this portion of the harbour on the

other side of Valletta. Beyond the Marsamuscetto harbour and the little bay of St. Julian, are the spacious barracks designated Pembroke Camp, with shooting-ranges for musketry practice.

Thus Valletta is a capital city, a garrison town, and a naval arsenal of the first magnitude. Yet it speaks volumes for the character of the Maltese that the dangerous classes are far from being numerous; vice is nowhere prominent, order reigns unbroken; and except during the Carnival and at Easter, even the natural love of noise inherent in the population seems to go to sleep with the setting sun. It must be acknowledged that the noises in Malta form a distinct drawback to the visitors' pleasure, the church bells for instance are of fine metal and good proportions, but are nearly all fixtures, sometimes in a turret which would not allow of their being swung, but in almost every case only sounded by pulling a rope attached to the clapper or by beating the outside of a bell with a hammer. This, however, at some seasons, is incessant. The clocks also have a provoking habit of announcing the hour at every quarter, and as some of them strike Italian fashion up to twenty-four, their reminders of the flight of time grow rather wearisome. It is quite delightful to hear the bells of the English church of St. Paul chime in home fashion for service.

Although the rule of the Order of St. John conferred many substantial benefits upon the natives, its character at best was that of a benevolent despotism. Despotic indeed were the dominant caste who compelled a native to stand off the pavement when he saw a Knight approaching, and forbade a woman of any degree to appear in the Strada Reale, the main street of Valletta. Yet their rule was beneficial; irrespective of the direct charities which they maintained—hospitals for the sick, for women, for orphans, poor children, and foundlings, gratuitous dispensaries and distribution of food, in which purposes in 1796 they spent nearly £13,000—large tracts of country were planted with trees, the greatest possible benefit to the island, though viewed with distrust by Maltese to this day, who think they harbour mosquitoes and banditti. G. M. de Vignacourt in 1614 completed an aqueduct for Valletta, and Pinto a century later cultivated mulberry trees for the production of silk; scarce a Grand Master can be named who did not do something for the general welfare of the commonalty.

Thus the people throve, while luxury and aristocratic pomp sapped the energy of the members of the Order. For many years the galleys scoured the Mediterranean in pursuit of the corsairs, but Perellos in 1697 substituted for them decked ships of a larger size, and the navy seems gradually to have declined; during the eighteenth century it became the custom to permit privateers to rendezvous in the harbours of Valletta, and from the memoirs of the Earl of Charlemont in 1750 we learn that the warfare which used to be carried on by the Knights had fallen into the hands of Captain Fortunatus Wright and other adventurers. Yet it is pleasant to remember that almost the last duty performed by the fleet of the Order was to carry succour to the Italian and Sicilian sufferers by the earthquake of 1783.

The internal dissensions, which had always served to cripple the exertions of the Order, became much more serious when the French Revolution deprived them at one swoop of revenue to the amount of £50,000. The contagion spread through the commanderies in the other European countries, and despite the conversion of plate into money, and every expedient which insolvency suggests, the Grand Master had reached the end of his resources, and the Knights were prepared to take any desperate step to secure their individual safety. Nevertheless, had it depended upon the loyal Maltese, the annexation of Malta by the French in 1798 would only have been effected at the cost of much blood and treasure. "It was well," said one of Napoleon's lieutenants, as they viewed the stupendous fortifications, "that we had somebody to hand us the keys of these gates, or we should have had some trouble in forcing our way in." At the very last moment, when treachery and pusillanimity had admitted the invader, the native militia who garrisoned the two forts in Valletta, known as the Cavaliers of St. John and St. James, were with the utmost difficulty persuaded to surrender them without an independent struggle, and as soon as the main body of the French army had departed, although it carried with it the principal part of the Maltese regular troops, the natives rose, as they declared they would, against the plunderers of their churches, and unassisted by any foreign power shut up the 3,000 Frenchmen left behind within the fortifications of Valletta. This was on the 3rd September, 1798, and for two years the patriotic islanders made every effort to

take the city, with such small assistance as could be spared by Nelson and the English and Neapolitan Governments. Disease and famine prevailed among the unfortunates who had been left in the city, and in fact the island generally, and the loss of the Maltese during the struggle is computed to have been 20,000. Towards the end of the siege, in which the English had gradually become the allies and confidants of the Maltese, Sir Alexander Ball, one of Nelson's lieutenants, was elected Governor, and suggested a British protectorate. According to the treaty of Amiens the Order of St. John was to be revived under certain conditions and limitations, and the English troops were to evacuate the island in three months. This was so little to the taste of the Maltese that a deputation was despatched to London to protest against the proposal, and to solicit the English to remain in the country. When war broke out again, very shortly, the British were still in Malta, where they remained until, in 1814, the Treaty of Paris ratified that sentence which remains engraven on the Main Guard, "The love of the Maltese and the voice of Europe confirms these islands to great and invincible Britain"; and (adds a candid foreign critic) "I think that the Maltese have no cause to repent the consequences of that love."

THE END

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Walter I. Colls, Ph. Sc.

The Portland Vase.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD

MASTER-POTTER

By

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South Kensington Museum (S.K.M.)

Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn Street (M.P.G.)

Mr. A. H. Church (A.H.C.)

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD

CHAPTER I

HIS PRECURSORS

Elers of Bradwell; John and Thomas Astbury; Ralph Shaw; Thomas and John Wedgwood; Enoch Booth, and Ralph Daniel.

DURING the last quarter of the seventeenth century two potters of exceptional skill and marked individuality were at work in England. The earlier of these artists in clay was John Dwight of Fulham, a sketch of whose life and labours was given in the *Portfolio* for 1893. Dwight, whose artistic productions probably date from the year 1671, exercised no recognisable influence upon the other potters of his day. It was otherwise with the later ceramist, the Dutchman, John Philip Elers of Bradwell Wood and Dimsdale, near Burslem. He, with his brother David, came over from Amsterdam soon after the Revolution of 1688. As early as the year 1692 or 1693 his manufacture had attained a high degree of perfection; at this time he had a warehouse for the sale of his goods in the Poultry in London. Although his undertaking did not prove a commercial success and his own potworks was abandoned about the year 1710, Elers really initiated a complete change in the methods and style of Staffordshire earthenware. It is scarcely to be contested that he introduced into the district the process of glazing with salt, and thus founded a special local industry which for seventy years formed a considerable factor in the prosperity of "The Potteries." He perfected if he did not introduce the process

of washing, levigating, and otherwise preparing clays, and thus effected a marked improvement in the fineness, durability, solidity and general physical properties of the "bodies" or "pastes" of which they formed the chief constituent. But Elers did more than this, for a third innovation in the English practice of potting may be reasonably attributed to him. He used the lathe so as to turn his pieces into forms far thinner and more uniformly exact in shape than any which the wheel or the whirler could produce. The advent of J. P. Elers had in the end a most marked effect, though not one immediately perceptible, upon the subsequent productions of "The Potteries." It started the more intelligent and enterprising of the native master-potters upon new lines,—lines which, though they then included something of a foreign element, soon acquired a thoroughly English character. There is, indeed, an immense interval and contrast between the grand, massive, picturesque and quaint, yet clumsy, coarse and cumbrous platters, tygs and posset-pots of the latter half of the seventeenth century, on the one hand, and, on the other, the dainty, sharply-turned tea-sets of fine red stoneware made by Elers, which not even Wedgwood himself, with all the appliances of sixty years later, could rival, at least in this material. Elers' ornaments, when he added them to his vessels, were sharp in execution, graceful in design, and in thorough keeping with the fine texture of his ware. They were impressed, upon lumps of clay stuck on to the turned pieces of ware, by means of brass moulds or stamps sharply cut or engraved with intaglio designs. A may-blossom, a bird, an interlacement of curves, a cross formed of *fleur-de-lis*, figured amongst his favourite devices, the superfluous clay being scraped off from the edges of the reliefs by means of a small tool. Elers and his proceedings were at first regarded with jealousy, but soon received the homage of imitation. A potter, John Astbury by name, obtained admission to Elers' factory; by feigning idiocy he secured employment therein in some humble capacity until he had learnt their secret methods of procedure. Then he modified and extended the processes which he had surreptitiously acquired, and so was able to make a large variety of cheap and curious wares. Never quite equal in fineness of body and sharpness of ornament to the productions of Elers, the pieces

turned out by John Astbury are not mere imitations. For the paste of his ware he used various clays, which acquired in the kiln a red, fawn, buff, orange, or chocolate hue—some of these colours being developed by the glaze employed. Generally, his ornaments were applied in Devon or pipe clay and stamped. They consisted of foliage and flowers; crowns, harps, shells, stags, lions, birds, and heraldic ornaments. For the inside of his tea-pots he often used a wash of white clay, and he was continually making experiments in the mixing and tempering of clays. Thus it happened that about the year 1720 he was led to introduce a due proportion of silica, in the form of ground flint,[1] into the body of his ware, in order to secure a higher degree of refractoriness in the fire, as well as less shrinkage. To his son, Thomas Astbury, who commenced business in 1723 at Shelton, may be attributed further improvements in earthenware bodies. He it was who first produced the "cream-colour," which afterwards, as perfected by Josiah Wedgwood, displaced almost all other materials for useful table ware.

To these potters, Elers and Astbury, due credit must be given. They were the forerunners of Wedgwood, who in a long letter to his partner Bentley, in the year 1777, clearly defined and honourably acknowledged the indebtedness of the potters of his day to the improved processes introduced by the foreign artist. Elers and his immediate successors inaugurated an era of experimental inquiry; but the great potter, whose chief labours in the ceramic art I shall endeavour to describe in the present paper, accomplished a greater and more complete task. Under happier circumstances than those of his predecessors, with a keener sense of what was beautiful and appropriate, with more untiring industry and greater commercial aptitude, aided moreover by accomplished advisers, Wedgwood became the chief agent in the transformation of an entire manufacture. The year 1760, when he may be regarded as having become thoroughly established as a master-potter, marks the boundary between that which is crude and archaic and that which is refined and modern. As to what were the losses involved in the change wrought by Wedgwood something will be said later on in this essay; there can be no doubt that the gains were great.

[1] This discovery was attributed by Wedgwood to Heath a potter, of Shelton.

Although the year 1760 has been named as a critical date in the history of Staffordshire earthenware, it must not be supposed that the inception of many improvements and changes had not occurred earlier, nor, on the other hand, that the older methods did not linger on, especially in the minor potworks, to the very close of the eighteenth century. Then, too, it should be remembered that many local potters besides those previously named contributed important elements to the final result. During the forty years 1720–1760 numerous patents for ceramic improvements were taken out, and unpatented inventions made or utilised. Amongst the more important of these may be named the slip-kiln, used first by Ralph Shaw ; the fixing of the proportions in which various clays should be mixed, by Thomas and John Wedgwood ; the introduction of liquid glazes or dips, by Enoch Booth ; and the employment of plaster of Paris for moulds, by Ralph Daniel. It would, however, be tedious, were it possible, to present a *résumé* of the various methods and materials contributed by Wedgwood's immediate predecessors to the art of potting. That he availed himself of many of them, as well as improved and added to them, is certain.

CHAPTER II

HIS EARLY YEARS

Birth; Education; Traditions of Childhood; Apprenticeship; Partnerships with John Harrison and Thomas Whieldon.

Josiah, the thirteenth and youngest child of Thomas and Mary Wedgwood, was baptised in the parish church of Burslem, Staffordshire, on the 12th of July, 1730 (old style). He came of a race of potters who for several generations had been exercising their ancient and useful craft in the district of "The Potteries." His parents were neither poor nor rich: many of his relatives were in prosperous circumstances; some might be called comparatively wealthy, and occupied important and honourable positions. The boy went first to a dame's school; afterwards, when about seven years old, he attended as a day-scholar a school kept by one Blunt, in a large half-timbered house situated in the market-place of the neighbouring town of Newcastle-under-Lyme. This schoolmaster appears to have been a man of more than ordinary acquirements, not unacquainted with the elements of natural science. The biographer of Wedgwood, the late Miss Meteyard, tells us, I know not on what authority, that the young Josiah was an adept in the art of cutting out with scissors designs in paper. These represented "an army at combat, a fleet at sea, a house and garden, or a whole potworks and the shapes of the ware made in it. These cuttings when wetted were stuck along the whole length of the sloping desks, to the exquisite delight of the scholars, but often to the great wrath of the severe pedagogue." It is to be hoped that this tale is true, and that we have here a significant indication and presage of the artistic capacity which reached so high a degree of development in subsequent years. Another tradition recorded by the same writer points in a similar direction. For it seems that the boy in

very early years—he must have been at the time under nine—began to collect curious and beautiful things, commencing a kind of small museum in one of his father's work-sheds, and loading its shelves with fossils and minerals from the neighbourhood. This tradition is the more reasonable since we know that in after-life Wedgwood became an ardent collector of shells, both recent and fossil, as well as of other objects of natural history.

In the summer of 1739, before he had quite completed his ninth year, Josiah Wedgwood lost his father, who died, after a short illness, at the age of fifty-two. At this early age Josiah Wedgwood was removed from school and began the work of a practical potter in the factory of his eldest brother Thomas, to whom the patrimony of his father had been bequeathed. Here his nicety of eye and dexterity of hand served him in good stead, so that he soon became an expert "thrower" on the wheel. After the lapse of about two years he was attacked by small-pox, which assumed a virulent form, and greatly enfeebled him for some time, more particularly affecting his right knee. However, when Josiah was in his fifteenth year he was bound apprentice to his brother Thomas for a term of five years, dating from the eleventh of November, 1744. Unfortunately, as it seemed at the time, he was soon compelled by the return of the weakness in his right knee to abandon the thrower's bench and to turn his attention in other directions. This necessary change in the character of Josiah's employment may not have been without its advantages, and probably gave the youthful potter a wider insight into the practical requirements of his craft, and familiarised him with the various separate departments of the works. At this time he was engaged in "moulding," and in the making, by the association of variously-coloured clays, of imitations of banded and streaked agate, in the form of knife-hafts and snuff-boxes; these were afterwards mounted by the cutlers and hardwaremen of Sheffield and Birmingham. Towards the close of his apprenticeship Josiah seems to have developed a strong tendency to original experiment. In this direction he met with no sympathy from his master and eldest brother, who refused his proposal, when the term of his indentures was over, to take him into partnership. Josiah then agreed to a proposal made by John Harrison, a tradesman of Newcastle, who, though apparently ignorant of the potter's craft, had invested money in the factory of Thomas Alders, of Cliff Bank, near Stoke. Thus it

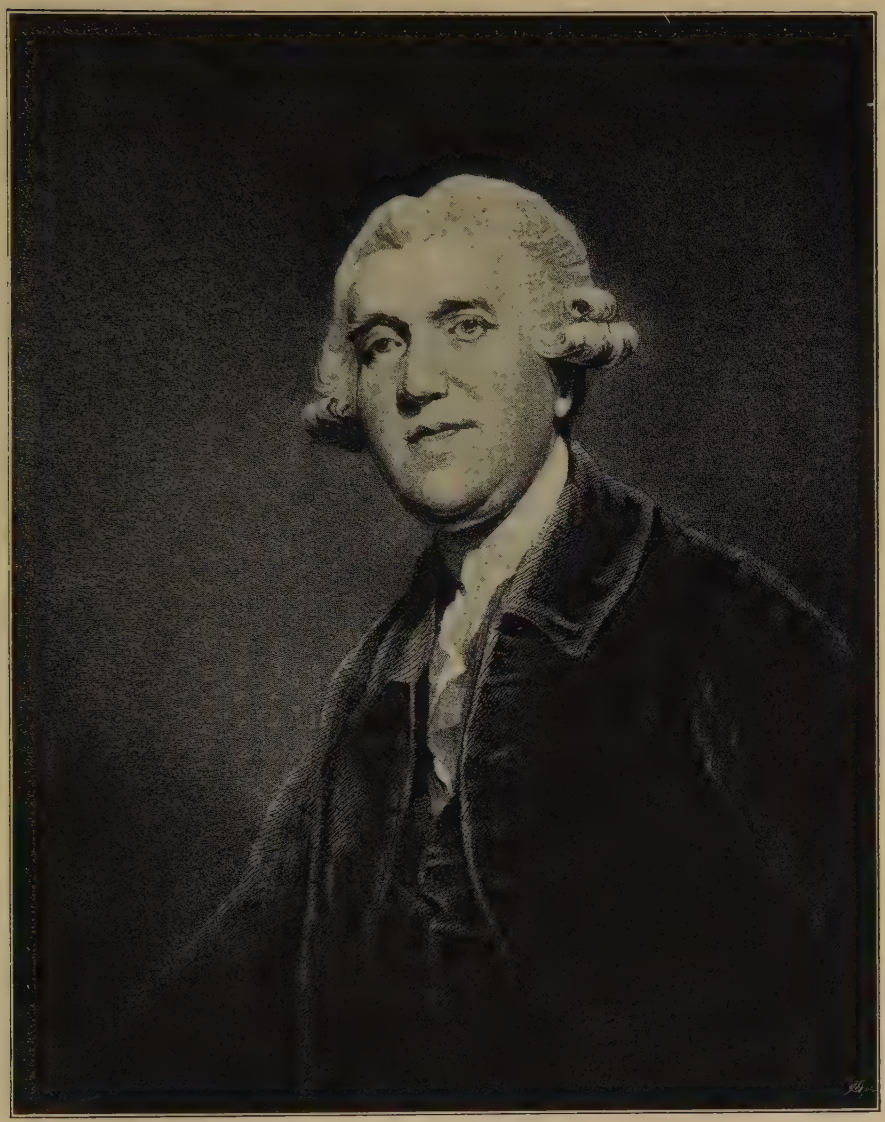

Fig. 1.—*Josiah Wedgwood. From the Engraving by S. W. Reynolds, after Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

came to pass that a partnership was formed, of which Josiah Wedgwood, Thomas Alders, and John Harrison were the three members. This arrangement did not last long, nor was it wholly satisfactory. It could scarcely have been expected that these three men would have worked well together. One of them had nothing but a pecuniary interest in the potworks; the nominal chief seems to have been endowed with very ordinary skill and intelligence in his craft; while the junior partner was an enthusiastic innovator, full of schemes for the improvement of the potter's art, and at the same time greatly in advance of his local contemporaries in mental acquirement and artistic perception. Wedgwood at this time (1751 or 1752) had but just attained his majority, yet he soon introduced many improvements into the humble pottery of which he had taken charge. The outturn of the works increased; the clouded, mottled, and tortoiseshell wares, as well as the salt-glazed white ware, which together constituted the staple of its productions, attained a greater degree of excellence and were more highly appreciated by buyers. But Wedgwood found himself thwarted in many directions, and was not allowed to share his due proportion of the increased profits. His generous spirit, so conspicuous in after life under more happy circumstances, was galled by the limitations imposed upon him by the greed and narrowness of view which characterised his co-partners. Fortunately he was soon enabled to escape from his thraldom, a new partnership being offered to him by a worthy master-potter, Thomas Whieldon, of Fenton, who had risen from small beginnings to a position of considerable importance. With him Wedgwood worked for a few years (probably six), and then, about the year 1758, determined to establish himself in business, for there is a memorandum of agreement still extant, dated December 30, 1758, by which Wedgwood engaged the services for five years of one of his relatives, a second cousin, Thomas Wedgwood, then living in Worcester, and practising there as a journeyman potter. There is no doubt that much of the merit of Thomas Whieldon's productions in agate, tortoiseshell, and other wares is to be attributed to his partner. There is a particularly rich green glaze which Josiah Wedgwood has the credit of inventing, or greatly improving, at this time, and which is frequently found upon dessert services and other pieces which have been assigned with good reason to the factory of Whieldon.

CHAPTER III

AS MASTER-POTTER

The Ivy House Works; Increase of Business; Division of Labour Introduced; Finish versus *Vitality; Public Spirit and Generosity*

In the year 1759, at the age of twenty-nine, Josiah Wedgwood was working entirely on his own account as a master-potter. He had already achieved a local reputation, but none of his contemporaries could have then anticipated the wide renown which he was afterwards to acquire. His capital was extremely small; but he knew his strength, and ventured to take on lease a portion of the premises belonging to his distant cousins, John and Thomas Wedgwood, of the Big House, Burslem. These potters were advanced in years, and having accumulated a sufficient fortune, were at this time partially retiring from business. The rent he agreed to pay was no more than £10 yearly, but the factory he acquired would probably be regarded as having at the present day an annual value of ten times that sum. It included a cottage, two kilns, and a sufficient number of workrooms and covered sheds. It was known as Ivy House Works.

In these modest premises, which soon became wholly inadequate to his rapidly-extending manufacturing and business requirements, Wedgwood, in spite of the weakness occasioned by a recent illness, set actively to work, restricting his labours at first to the production of small ornamental articles, similar, no doubt, to those which he had made when in partnership with Whieldon. Here an arrangement which he had made with that potter, at the outset of their association, stood him in good stead; for he had expressly reserved to himself the right of keeping secret all the improvements which he might effect during the term of partnership. He began with a very small staff of workmen,

but these were chosen with discretion, and so trained in habits of order and observation as to be capable of realising in some measure, as time went on, the ideals of their master. But Wedgwood himself was not merely the guiding spirit of his factory, but the best and most skilful workman in the place. At first he made most of his own models and moulds, prepared his own mixtures of clays, superintended the firing of his kilns, and acted as clerk and warehouseman as well. His reputation rapidly advanced among his neighbours, and he was frequently called upon to exercise his ingenuity in making matches to replace broken pieces belonging to services of foreign origin. Orders came in from a more widely extended area, while Wedgwood himself started new lines of manufacture which speedily attracted attention and acquired a certain degree of importance. At this time the potters of Staffordshire impressed no signature or other distinctive mark upon their wares; Wedgwood as yet had not adopted the useful practice, so that we have to depend, for our knowledge of the kinds of work which he was producing at the Ivy House Works, upon uncertain traditions and the far from precise recollections of old workmen, although the manuscript memoranda of the great potter himself do afford some indications of the directions in which his activity was then employed. It is stated by Miss Meteyard that Wedgwood in these early days added the manufacture of white stoneware to his other labours, and that of this body he produced relief-tiles for fireplaces: it would be of extreme interest to recover a few examples of a kind of ware which no collectors of the present day associate with the name of Wedgwood.

In a year or two the works were enlarged and more journeymen engaged, while the modern system of the division of labour was gradually introduced, so that each workman was no longer everything by turns and nothing for long. This distinction and distribution of work avoided the waste of time inseparable from the old-fashioned methods prevalent in potworks. The constant change from one kind of occupation to another and from one part of the factory to another,—from mixing shed to slip kiln, to thrower's bench, to moulder's shop, to firing oven, and back again, had indeed many drawbacks. It was impossible for any one man to acquire equal facility in the varied kinds of manipulation demanded in the different departments of the works. And there was

waste of material and injury to the plant, as well as loss of time, involved in these constantly recurring changes of occupation. Wedgwood thoroughly understood the impossibility of conducting a large and rapidly growing business upon the old lines. His was an orderly mind; he could not tolerate the dirt, disorder, and slovenliness which were the common characteristics of the workers in clay. It is not to be denied that the methodic revolution which he effected in the technique of his pottery resulted in the loss of certain elements of value. The quaintness, the *naïveté*, the picturesqueness of the rough processes and products of the older days disappeared. Individuality was lost. The workmen became parts of a well-ordered and accurately-adjusted machine. The marks of human handiwork became unrecognisable. A tendency to aim at mechanical perfection and mere finish was developed at the expense of higher qualities. But it should not be forgotten that the vast majority of the objects turned out from Wedgwood's factory belonged to the class which he designated "useful ware." For their safe carriage by land and by water, and for their complete adaptation to their intended uses, perfect regularity in form and substance were most desirable qualities. Dozens of his plates can be piled up without exerting unequal pressure upon one another, so exactly do they correspond in size and shape; their rims, too, have precisely the right contour. The lids of his jugs and tea-pots fit perfectly; his handles can be really held, his spouts pour. Thus, while in the domain of fine art mechanical perfection often proves incompatible with vitality of expression, it is otherwise in the case of work which lacks its full measure of utility if it be not wrought with careful finish.

Improvements in kilns, and in the minor mechanical appliances needed in order to carry into practice his ceramic ideals, now occupied much of Wedgwood's time. Sketching patterns and making models also engaged his attention, but he was also busy in endeavouring to bring to perfection the cream-coloured body or paste which very soon was to become familiar and famous under the name of 'Queen's Ware. Of this, the most widely-known and most abundant product of Wedgwood's skill, something more will have to be said later on in the present essay.

In the course of 1760, less than two years after Wedgwood had begun his labours at the Ivy House Works, we meet with a proof not only of his increasing financial prosperity but also of that public spirit and

generosity which distinguished his later years. For at this time he contributed the sum of ten pounds towards the establishment of a second Free School in Burslem, most of the smaller master-potters giving but half this amount. Very shortly afterwards Wedgwood's attention was directed to another matter of local interest. The condition of the roads in his neighbourhood was most deplorable, while such means of communication between the towns and villages of the Potteries and the larger centres of population as existed were circuitous, badly planned, and wholly inadequate in number. Wedgwood never lost sight of the importance of securing easy communication and rapid transit of raw materials and of goods by land and by water between the chief places of production and of distribution.

CHAPTER IV

HIS CERAMIC IMPROVEMENTS

Queen's Ware; Black Basalt Ware and Encaustic Painting; White Semiporcelain; Agate and Marbled Wares; Terra Cotta, &c.

In the preceding chapter an outline has been traced of the work accomplished or begun by Wedgwood during the first three years of his occupation of the Ivy House Works (1759–1761). One of the most troublesome, and yet, in the end, most successful of these labours, included a long series of experiments made with the object of improving the common cream-coloured earthenware of the district. The body of this ware had been modified from time to time by several potters, and had been made finer in texture as well as brighter in appearance by the alterations which had been introduced in the preparation of the raw materials, and in the selection of the silicious and argillaceous substances which were its components. When this improved body was glazed with salt, in the manner employed for true stoneware, it was still somewhat of a greyish or dull pale yellow; and when the common lead glaze was employed it developed a still darker and less satisfactory hue. The experiments of Wedgwood were begun in the early part of 1759, while he was still in partnership with Whieldon, but were pushed much further during the year 1761. He employed both ground flint and pipeclay in association with compounds of lead in the glaze, and thus got a mixture which, having several properties in common with the body to which it was applied, was less liable than the common lead glaze then in use, to become *crazed*, that is, irregularly fissured on being fired in the kiln. The body itself was likewise improved and made of purer materials, and thus admitted of being delicately tinted in a number of hues varying from a cream to a saffron colour.

It was not however until some years subsequent to the period of Wedgwood's career of which I am now writing that the final improvements in cream-ware were effected. They may be referred to a date shortly subsequent to the year 1768, when the attention of the Staffordshire potters was forcibly directed to the true Kaolin or China clay of Cornwall and to the felspathic mixture known as China-stone or Cornish stone, both these materials being named and their employment in the manufacture of porcelain claimed in the patent granted to William Cookworthy of Plymouth in that year. This conclusion is founded partly on the evidence of Wedgwood's own note-books and partly on a memorandum by Enoch Wood, which is published in full in my *English Earthenware*, p. 82. Still even in 1761 Wedgwood's cream-colour ware had attained a decided superiority in colour and in smoothness of glaze over the corresponding fabric made by his local competitors, while the forms which he introduced were far more varied and elegant. In these productions the good taste, the sense of fitness and the keen power of observation which distinguished Wedgwood found their appropriate expression. One can trace the motives of much of his work, both as to form and decoration, in the collections of various kinds which he was amassing, and in his constant intercourse with the metal-workers of Sheffield and of Birmingham. To the former source he was indebted for the designs derived from objects of natural history, particularly shells and plants; to the latter source he owed many shapes and methods of decorative treatment which were in use for silver-plated ware. There is a cream-colour centre-piece or compotier for the dessert table, preserved in the Jermyn Street Museum, which affords an apt illustration of the metal-work designs which Wedgwood adapted to his reproductions in a different material. Such adaptations may not be wholly justifiable from an artistic standpoint, but they had the merit of introducing the elements of lightness and elegance into a manufacture which had hitherto been often marked by a tendency to heaviness and clumsiness. A more legitimate loan from the processes of the silversmith was the introduction of diapers and other conventional designs in pierced and perforated work. This style of ornamentation was subsequently pushed to its extreme permissible limit by some Leeds potters, Messrs. Hartley, Greens and Co., who became the most successful

imitators of Wedgwood's cream-ware, about the year 1783 or perhaps somewhat earlier. Of a bolder design and more free in treatment is the beautiful chestnut basket from the Jermyn Street Collection which is represented in Fig. 2. Another change for the better effected by Wedgwood consisted in the greater sobriety of the enamel colours with which his cream-ware was decorated when not left entirely plain. It should be mentioned here that he did not disdain taking advantage

Fig. 2.—Chestnut Basket; cream-coloured ware.

of hints as to models and ornamentation afforded by oriental and Dresden porcelain and by the productions of Chelsea and Bow, nor was he free from indebtedness to the Dutch faience made in such large quantities during the eighteenth century. Wedgwood's earlier works in cream-ware were occasionally enriched with gold, but until the year 1765 this metal was not burnt into the glaze but simply attached by means of japanner's oil-size. Later on true gilding was more generally and more freely introduced, especially on what may be called armorial services.

Towards the close of Wedgwood's career the love for extremely rich and showy decoration had increased, and the factory at Etruria possessed the means of gratifying it. Still even then there was a certain measure of restraint shown in the painting executed under Wedgwood's superintendence,—a restraint not exhibited by the contemporary work produced in the china factory at Worcester.

In connection with cream-ware, or rather Queen's Ware, for so this product came to be called in 1763, after Wedgwood had been appointed Potter to Queen Charlotte, a similar but nearly white fabric should be named. It was called Pearl Ware. Its production was very limited in amount, and was in part the natural result of greater purity in the materials used. The period to which it may be assigned is a late one in the life of the potter. It was used occasionally, amongst other purposes, for those delicately tinted shell dessert-services (see Fig. 3) in which a general yellowish ground would have impaired the purity of the superposed colours. The writer possesses an exquisitely turned goblet of this Pearl Ware, the exterior being veined with gold lustre and gold pink produced by means of Purple of Cassius. Both Queen's Ware and Pearl Ware were employed in the making of statuettes and busts: of these a few specimens will be found in the South Kensington Museum and in other collections. They rarely bear the stamp of Wedgwood's name, but have been identified by means of the few examples which have fortunately been so marked. There is for instance a symbolical bust of "Sadness" in the Jermyn Street Museum which is thus authenticated; it is no less than twenty-two inches in height. The large figure of "Fortitude" at South Kensington is not signed, but a duplicate in private hands is.

Black basalt ware is another famous product of Wedgwood's kilns: in a cruder form it had long been made in the Staffordshire potteries, and was often called "Egyptian Black." It owes its colour chiefly to iron. The developed fabric as produced by Wedgwood was richer in hue, finer in grain, and smoother in surface than that made before his time, or subsequently turned out by his local successors and imitators. Its density was high (2·9); it took a fine polish on the lapidary's wheel, and forms an excellent touchstone for gold. Some of the black basalt produced at the Leeds Pottery was, however, almost if not quite equal to that of Wedgwood. He employed it extensively for large relief-plaques, vases,

life-size busts, and medallion-portraits of "illustrious Ancients and Moderns." With his seals (frequently wheel-polished on the shanks), and his small intaglios in black basalt, collectors are familiar. This ware also furnished the ground on which the majority of his so-called "encaustic" paintings were executed. These were intended to reproduce the effects of the work on Greek and Etruscan painted vases and other vessels. The enamel colours used were so constituted as to yield a matt or nearly dead surface, while the black background was either dull or had the half-lustre of Nolan ware. Unfortunately the timid touch of Wedgwood's enamellers was not competent to realise the associated strength and

Fig. 3.—Dessert Dish; tinted white ware.

beauty of the original classical conceptions which they were engaged in reproducing. And it is necessary to confess that Wedgwood's encaustic paintings on vases and plaques have generally a depressing effect upon those who really appreciate the supreme excellence of the antique art which was supposed to have inspired them. However mechanically perfect, the imitations were artistically defective. The originals which Wedgwood copied were moreover for the most part not happily chosen. His largest work of this class is a reproduction from a Greek vase of the period of decadence preserved in the British Museum. His copy of this

immense vase or crater, in the Jermyn Street Collection, is no less than thirty-three inches high and eighteen inches in diameter. The rare bronzed ware made by Wedgwood appears to have been black basalt dusted over, sometimes before and sometimes after firing, with a metallic bronze powder. Wedgwood's work in plain black was, however, far more satisfactory in effect than any which had been enriched by subsequent treatment in the way of enamelling or coating with metallic preparations. Witness the fine series of busts, about twenty inches in height, in the South Kensington Museum, which represent Zeno, Cicero, Cato, Seneca, Bacon, Barneveldt, Ben Jonson, and Grotius. There also exist several statuettes from the antique, and many fine vases, plain or with figures and ornaments in relief. The basalt vases made between 1769 and 1780 were usually rather simply decorated with vertical shallow flutings and strap-work, and with festoons of drapery, flowers or husks : their handles sprang from masks, goats' heads, satyrs, &c. During the whole of the partnership between Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley this class of vases was made in large numbers. But about the year 1776 bas-reliefs of figures were first applied to these vases, amongst the first so used in that year being the Dancing Hours designed by Flaxman. Another vase which this sculptor modelled about the same time is a two-handled drinking vessel covered with high reliefs—masks of Minerva, Cupids with musical instruments, and festoons of foliage ; a copy is preserved at South Kensington. The well-known large ewers for water and wine were also the work of Flaxman. A fine mug of this ware is shown in Fig. 4. Wedgwood was not far wrong in writing, as he did in 1779, in the fifth edition of his Catalogue, of his suites of five vases for chimney-pieces, "We have reason to conclude that there are not any vases of porcelain, marble, or bronze, either ancient or modern, so highly finished and sharp in their ornaments as these black vases."

I have omitted to state that many objects of practical and domestic utility were made in this black ware. Amongst these, inkstands in great variety are found, as well as salt-cellars, flower-pots, and candlesticks. The large lamp in the Jermyn Street Museum (Fig. 5) could hardly be employed otherwise than as an ornament, but it is an excellent example of black basalt ware : the design and modelling are good, and the material of fine quality though it has suffered in places from over-firing.

Full justice cannot be done to the artistic effect of specimens in black basalt unless they are seen against a suitably coloured background. Wedgwood himself appreciated the difficulty of showing them properly, and wrote to his partner Bentley recommending the employment of some

Fig. 4.—Mug, silver mounts; black basalt ware.

yellow material in order to bring out the tone and hue of the vases exhibited in the show-room. This recommendation is thoroughly justified by the experience of the modern collector. Yellow textile fabrics and even yellow papers strikingly enhance the beauty of this black

Fig. 5.—Lamp; black basalt ware.

material. In the same way it will be found that, in framing plaques and portrait cameos of basalt for the purpose of mounting them in articles of furniture, slightly polished satin wood forms an effective bordering.

Wedgwood made tea and coffee sets in black basalt ware, the pieces being fluted or decorated with reliefs of figures in the same material. Occasionally he used simple enamelled designs upon the edges of his cups, saucers, milk jugs, and trays, more rarely he introduced conventional patterns in burnished silver or gold.

A kind of white semi-porcelain was made at an early period by Wedgwood. He used it at first for the plinths of his marbled and variegated vases,—afterwards, in an improved form, for some of his portrait medallions and plaques. It differed from the white jasper which I shall presently describe, in its slightly straw-coloured or greyish yellow hue, in its waxen smooth surface, and in its marked degree of translucency. It did not contain the compounds of baryta which formed characteristic, and indeed essential, constituents of the true jasper body, a subsequent invention. A tendency to warp and crack in firing reduced its usefulness as a ceramic paste.

Variegated ware as made by Wedgwood was of two kinds. One of these, which may be distinguished as "solid" agate ware, was coloured throughout its entire substance by means of the association in bands, twists, stripes, and waves, of clays of different hues. It had been brought to a high state of perfection, possibly by our potter himself during his partnership with Whieldon, but it can scarcely be considered a distinctive product of Wedgwood's independent labours. But in his hands it was far more largely used for purely ornamental pieces, such as vases, than heretofore, while at the same time he produced by means of this material several characteristic imitations of definite kinds of natural agate and marble. The other kind of variegated ware made by Wedgwood was coloured on the surface only, the body being of common cream-coloured earthenware (see Fig. 6). The mottled and veined colouring was picturesquely irregular and varied much in hue. The handles, rims, and occasionally, the plinths, of vases in this ware often showed the natural colour of the cream-ware body, or were covered with oil-gilding. Amongst the natural materials imitated were these—granite, speckled with red, grey, white, and black; serpentine, with mottlings of

green, grey, and yellow; antique yellow, saffron veined with black; also, Egyptian pebble, jasper, porphyry, and several kinds of agate.

Under the designations, Rosso antico, cane-colour, and bamboo, Wedgwood included a number of bodies which would now be called *terra cotta*. They had a dead, dry surface, and so differed from the black basalt as to be distinctly porous. They varied much in hue, but their names afford a good indication of the range of colour which they present. Two varieties of these terra cottas were sometimes associated in the same piece, the body being in one colour, the reliefs in another. Moreover these bodies were sometimes used in conjunction with the black basalt: sometimes they were decorated with reliefs in white paste. The red terra cotta was occasionally made of a pale tint; a chocolate hue is also known (see Fig. 7). Red reliefs on black basalt, white on chocolate, purplish black on white, and dull sage green on cane-colour, afforded satisfactory contrasts or harmonies. Some of these terra cotta pastes, such as the white and green above named, were

Fig. 6.—Vase; cream ware coloured in imitation of granite.

probably of later introduction than the others. I may repeat here, what I have mentioned in a previous chapter, that Wedgwood's red terra cotta never equalled in fineness of texture and beauty of hue the red ware made long before his day by Elers of Bradwell, nor that darker and still denser product invented very early in the eighteenth century by Böttger at Dresden.

Wedgwood's "jasper" body is of so remarkable a character—is so distinctly an original invention of his own—that it demands separate dis-

Fig. 7.—Teapot; chocolate terra-cotta, white reliefs.

cussion. The five succeeding chapters (V. to IX.) will be devoted to its consideration. This treatment involves, I am aware, a break in the chronological sequence which has hitherto been recognized, at least in some measure, as a guiding principle in tracing the progressive development of Wedgwood's life-work. But when the jasper body has been considered from various points of view, the thread of the narrative will be resumed.

CHAPTER V

HIS INVENTION OF THE "JASPER" BODY

Its Characteristic Components; Compounds of Baryta; Range of Colour; Solid Jasper and Jasper-Dip.

It was Josiah Wedgwood's appreciation of antique gems cut in onyx and niccolo that led him to invent the most original and the most beautiful of all the ceramic materials with which he worked. This was the jasper-body or jasper-paste. Though it may be roughly described, when in its simplest form, as opaque and white, its opacity and its whiteness were susceptible of considerable variation. Sometimes it has the deadness of chalk, but the finer varieties possess the delicate hue and faint translucency of ivory or vellum. Wedgwood and his artists took advantage of this translucent character of the white jasper, as it allowed the colour of the ground to appear in a slight degree through the thinner parts of the cameo reliefs and thus suggested, as in some draperies, the idea of a fine and light texture. On the other hand, there were many subjects and styles of treatment where any marked degree of translucency in the material used for the reliefs was of decided disadvantage; here the more opaque varieties of the jasper-body were preferred. The smoothness of surface which this ware, as made by Josiah Wedgwood, almost invariably possessed, is delightful at once to the senses of touch and sight, and, moreover, it affords one of the best criteria for distinguishing old work from new. It was caused chiefly by the extreme fineness to which the components of the jasper-body were reduced, but the exact adjustment of the temperature of firing the ware to its composition doubtless influenced the result. The modern jasper-body is granular—

"saccharoid," to borrow a geological term—in appearance and rough to the finger: it needs to be rubbed down with fine emery before it can be made to pass successfully this test of touch. Though generally left with its natural matt or nearly matt surface the jasper ware is susceptible of a fine polish. Wedgwood occasionally polished the grounds and bevelled edges of some of his smaller cameos and intaglios, particularly in his more direct imitations of natural stratified stones: examples of polished edges are furnished by the two specimens figured on Plate III., and by the bevel (showing three strata) of the Medusa plaque (Fig. 8). The inside of tea-cups, bowls, and salt-cellars was also frequently ground and polished on the lathe.

The peculiarity in chemical composition which marks out the jasper-ware body from all other ceramic pastes was brought about by the introduction of a compound of the element barium. This metal occurs in nature chiefly in the form of sulphate, the mineral, which is found abundantly in Derbyshire, being known as cawk, heavy-spar, and barytes. The distinctive character of the alkaline earth contained in heavy-spar seems to have been first ascertained by Guyton de Morveau in 1779: four years afterwards Withering recognised the same earth in a mineral carbonate, from Leadhills in Lanarkshire, now called Witherite. But as early as the year 1773 Wedgwood was making experiments with these two minerals. The chemical knowledge of his day was, however, too imperfect to be of great use to the inquiring potter, who was obviously much puzzled by the apparently capricious behaviour of the two compounds under the action of fire. In 1774 he wrote to his partner Bentley, "I must go into Derbyshire to search for spath fusible or No. 19:" not long afterwards he made the journey thither and found what he required. Wedgwood's keen observation and his untiring assiduity in experiment were soon rewarded. He had learnt the chief properties, as constituents of his new jasper-ware, of the sulphate of baryta or cawk and of the rather more fusible carbonate, although we possess no evidence of his having discovered the differences in their chemical composition. Henceforth cawk became the chief ingredient of his "jasper," although a small quantity of the carbonate of baryta was occasionally introduced as

well. The other materials were clay and finely-ground flint.[1] He tried several kinds of clay such as Weal blue clay, Dorset clay, and Cornish China-clay. He also used Cornish or China stone which contains a notable proportion of felspar. Wedgwood wrote to his partner in somewhat enigmatical terms when indicating the ingredients of his jasper-body, saying that its composition was "too precious to reveal all at once." One of his formulæ, when translated into percentages, is probably pretty nearly represented by these figures—sulphate of baryta, 59 parts; clay, 29; flint, 10; carbonate of baryta, 2.

One of the chief charms of jasper-ware consists in the daintiness of its colour. Besides several tones and hues of blue derived from cobalt, we meet with a yellow, a lilac, and a green jasper; there is also a black variety. Each of these colours occurs in several modifications. The black is sometimes bluish, sometimes neutral: the green, which was derived from chromium, though always toned with some grey, exhibits many different hues, ranging from yellowish-green to bluish-green; the lilac, due to manganese, varies generally between a pink and a pale purple, but occasionally presents the precise hue of a mixture of cocoa-infusion and milk; and the yellow is slightly greyish, with a tendency towards an amber hue in some examples; in other pieces it approaches the colour of the lemon, while some varieties may be called buff. As a rule Wedgwood limited himself to the association, in any single production of his kiln, of no more than two of the above colours, with the addition of white; the least happy in effect of these combinations are those in which blue and yellow occur alone, unaccompanied by white.

Jasper-ware was made in two ways. In one process the entire substance was coloured by the metallic oxide used; in the other, the surface only was stained. The former method yielded the product known as "solid jasper," the latter gave the "jasper-dip"—by it the most delicate and refined effects were produced. This jasper-dip was invented in 1777, really in order to economise the costly oxide of cobalt. During the partnership with Bentley, the solid jasper was, however, chiefly employed. But at the time of Bentley's death in 1780, and for the next

[1] The useful fireproof cement lately introduced into commerce under the name "Purimachos" consists of the same ingredients, the clay being in smallest proportion. Some of Wedgwood's chemical vessels approach it very closely in composition.

fifteen years, Wedgwood produced the great majority of his larger ornamental pieces in jasper-dip. It is, however, to be noted that the two methods of manufacture were often associated in the same object. Thus, in the beautiful coloured chequered work which we find on some of the vases, flowerpots, and *déjeuner* sets of what we may call the *period of perfection*, (1781 to 1795), the little quatrefoils applied to the surface are of solid jasper, while the coloured squares are of jasper-dip. A troublesome defect in both methods ought not to be passed over. The facility with which the white jasper-body became tinctured with the colours imparted by various metallic oxides very frequently caused the thinner parts of the white reliefs to acquire a stain from the coloured surface below them. This discoloration is rarely absent from the edges of the white reliefs on a black ground, which frequently present a dirty-yellow hue.

CHAPTER VI

THE BARBERINI OR PORTLAND VASE

Modelled from the Original by Henry Webber; Discovery of the Vase, its Date, Decoration and Material; Prices realised by Wedgwood's Copies

THE name of Wedgwood is inseparably connected with that remarkable glass amphora commonly called the "Portland Vase:" the best of his copies, such as that reproduced in Plate I, challenge comparison with the original. That Wedgwood should have succeeded in translating the light-and-colour effects of a glass cameo into another material indicates how complete was his control of the "jasper-body," and how efficient was the aid which the modellers employed upon the task rendered him in this critical case. It is somewhat strange to find that Flaxman does not appear to have taken any part in this work, although Sir W. Hamilton had written to Wedgwood saying, "I should have thought my friend Flaxman would have been of use to you in your present undertaking; for I must do him the justice to say, I never saw a bas-relief executed in the true simple antique style half so well as that he did of the Apotheosis of Homer from one of my vases." According to Miss Meteyard (*Handbook*, pages 297-9), the work connected with the copying of the designs on the vase was done chiefly in London, although several of Wedgwood's own modellers—Henry Webber,[1] William Hackwood, William Wood, and others—were engaged upon it. The same authority also states that the original was not sent down to Etruria until December 22, 1790, more than four years after it had been entrusted to the care of Wedgwood. It is difficult to reconcile this statement with others—in Miss Meteyard's *Handbook*—such as

[1] An excellent modeller, recommended to Wedgwood by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir William Chambers.

this one, that in October, 1789, a perfect copy had been made, and with one's conviction that such a potter must have had the vase always at hand during his laborious efforts in preparing suitable colours and bodies wherewith to reproduce it. For it must be remembered that the original material is a very dark blue glass, over which was a layer of nearly opaque white glass, out of which the cameo figures in relief were cut. On the other hand, Wedgwood had to make his copies in a blue-black jasper-body ; to this the moulded reliefs in white jasper were affixed, but the variations observable in different specimens show that much surface-modelling must have been executed by hand after the reliefs had left the mould, and before the object was fired. It should be stated in this connection that Wedgwood altered slightly some of the minor details of the designs on this vase, and restored the parts which had been corroded.

The modern history of the Portland Vase, although it has been often given, is so interesting as to bear repetition here. A few words may not inappropriately be prefixed in correction of some of the views as to its date and subject entertained by writers on Wedgwood ware. It is now generally admitted by experts that this remarkable example of cameo-cutting belongs to the closing years of the Roman Republic, or at least cannot be of later date than the first century of the Imperial Principate. Diverse interpretations of the two scenes depicted on the vase have been offered, but it is most probable that they illustrate episodes in the courtship of Peleus and Thetis, their meeting on Mount Pelion being depicted in one group, and in the other the consent of Thetis to be the bride of Peleus, Poseidon and Eros being present. The youthful bust on the base of the vase represents Paris wearing a Phrygian cap, and heavily draped. It is a separate work, and formed no part of the original design.

Until the acquisition of the vase by the Duchess of Portland in the year 1785 it was known as the Barberini Vase, for it was discovered between the years 1623 and 1644, during the Pontificate of Urban VIII., Maffeo Barberini. This Pope had ordered the sepulchral mound called Monte de Grano, situated at a spot on the road to Frascati about two and a-half miles from Rome, to be excavated. In a marble sarcophagus of the early part of the third century of our era the vase was found ;

it was subsequently placed in the Barberini Palace in Rome. Sir W. Hamilton bought it (about the year 1782) for £1,000. He sold it to the Duchess of Portland in 1785: after her death the Duke of Portland purchased it for £1,029; he lent it to Wedgwood. In 1810 the fourth Duke deposited it on loan in the British Museum. On the 7th of February, 1845, William Lloyd, a scene-painter, wantonly broke it into many fragments. These were put together without much adroitness, the bottom was not replaced: the restored vase may be seen in the Gem and Gold Ornaments Room. The above-mentioned sarcophagus is now in the Museum of the Capitol in Rome. The reliefs on its sides, representing stories from the life of Achilles, furnished Wedgwood with materials for two of his largest and finest plaques, the "Sacrifice of Iphigenia," and "Priam begging the Body of Hector from Achilles." These subjects were taken, with some modifications, from the reliefs on the front and back of this sarcophagus: the sculptures on the two ends, representing groups of warriors, were also employed in the same way. The whole set of designs appears to have been modelled by the Italian sculptor Pacetti, who worked at Rome for Wedgwood under Flaxman's superintendence. Some additional particulars with regard to the plaque of the Sacrifice of Iphigenia (Plate II.) will be found in the next chapter.

It was Wedgwood's intention to produce fifty proofs (for so we may call the early copies) of his reproduction of the Portland Vase; we do not know whether this intention was fulfilled. About twenty of these old examples of the first issue have been recognised in various public and private collections. Nearly all approach very closely the dimensions of the original, which is $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, but differ from each other in the quality of the black ground, and in the tint, the degree of opacity, and the refinement of the white reliefs. At the beginning of the present century, a few years after Wedgwood's death, more copies of the vase were made, but we are inclined to think that none of them is equal to those of the first issue. It has also been produced in smaller sizes and in other materials; while Wedgwood's many imitators copied, though with very moderate success, this conspicuous triumph of his skill. Wedgwood charged fifty pounds for some of his copies of the Portland Vase; for other

examples, which were flawed or which did not entirely satisfy his critical eye, he seems to have been content with a smaller price. The sums which early specimens have brought by auction have increased a good deai during the last half-century. In 1849 the copy in the Tulk Collection was bought in for £20; that belonging to Samuel Rogers sold for fifty guineas in the year 1856; the copy in the Purnell Collection fetched no less than £173 when that remarkable assemblage of works of art was dispersed at Sotheby's in the year 1872. A good early copy sold at Christie's in 1890 for £199 10*s*: it was in the collection of Mr. Cornelius Cox. The example in the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street was originally bought (in 1793) by Dr. R. W. Darwin, of Shrewsbury; that in the British Museum is one of the first subscription copies: in the South Kensington there is a specimen from the Jones Bequest. That which is reproduced in Plate I., from Mr. J. L. Propert's Collection, is of unrivalled quality. The ground is rather lustrous and of a most unusual colour, not exactly black, but an extremely dark slate hue. The highest price yet realised for a copy of this vase was £215 5*s*.; this was in 1892, at the dispersal of the choice series of works by Wedgwood belonging to the late Mr. W. Durning Holt.

In a strict chronological discussion of Wedgwood's labours his reproduction of the Portland Vase should have been described in a later chapter, but the fame and importance of this work seemed to demand a separate and early treatment of the subject.

CHAPTER VII

HIS CAMEOS, MEDALLIONS, AND PLAQUES

Early Trials in Colour; Cameos and Intaglios in Semi-Porcelain and Black Basalt; Cameos and Medallions in the Jasper-Body; Plaques and Tablets; Important examples

During Wedgwood's lifetime, in the sixth and last English edition of his Catalogue, Class I. of his productions consists of two sections. The first of these is described as containing "Small Cameos from Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Antique Gems. 637 subjects." In the second section are included "Intaglios or Seals. 391 subjects." In the first edition of the Catalogue (1773) the Cameos and Intaglios were grouped together, and numbered in all 285 only. As time went on Wedgwood not merely increased the number and variety of his productions of this class, but endeavoured to attain a higher degree of perfection in material and workmanship. He tells us that his cameos were made for two purposes, some to serve as ornaments, the rest to be gathered into cabinets in order to illustrate mythology or history: this remark applied, doubtless, not only to the works comprised in Class I., but also to the cameos of the nine succeeding classes.

Amongst the most instructive specimens of the early cameos are a number of trial-pieces made of a cream-coloured paste or a greyish-white semi-porcelain, but having their grounds washed or painted with enamel colours or stains. The colours are olive-green, blue, dull pink, ochre-yellow, lavender, brick-red, chocolate, and black; in most cases the surface is glossy and uneven, while the colour is not brought accurately up to the contours of the relief-head. The small uncoloured semi-porcelain cameos lack sharpness, and they were not improved by the addition of coloured grounds. Still these first experi-

Walter L. Bolles, Ph. Sc.

The Sacrifice of Iphigenia.

ments of Wedgwood prepared the way for his subsequent successes, such as those which are illustrated by the medallions and plaques which are shown in Plates II. and III., and in the portrait cameos which have been selected for reproduction in the present paper. It must be owned that the terra-cotta body and the whitish semi-porcelain employed by Wedgwood were ill-adapted for the adequate reproduction of the exquisite workmanship of engraved gems—under even a very low magnifying power the serious defects of Wedgwood's materials are painfully apparent, the results obtained by the use of glass being immeasurably superior. With the finest varieties of black basalt and of the jasper-body a nearer approach to the delicacy of the originals was frequently secured, especially in the case of those objects which were of considerable size.

Wedgwood's invention of the jasper-body, though not brought to perfection at one stroke, finally enabled him to produce cameo reliefs on grounds coloured of almost any hue that might be preferred. As the *whole* ground, both that part shown and that covered by the relief, was coloured either throughout its substance or over its entire surface, there was no difficulty in securing perfect sharpness and accuracy of contour to the relief subsequently affixed thereto. This relief had been previously moulded; after its application to the prepared ground it could be, and often was, worked on by sculptor or modeller, so as to repair defects, and to do such undercutting as was necessary. Thus it is constantly observed that the character and merit of individual specimens of cameos taken from the very same mould are widely divergent. Some have not been touched by the tool, others have been modified by the after-treatment which they have received at the hands of more or less competent artists. Attention has already been directed to these points in the chapter on the Portland Vase. Another operation was not infrequently performed upon the smaller cameos, especially upon those intended for mounting: even the larger plaques for fireplaces were occasionally subjected to the same treatment, which consisted in polishing their edges on the lapidary's wheel. This at once revealed the fineness of the body, and indicated, even on a cursory inspection, that the colour of the piece was due, not to an enamel paint adherent to the surface, but to an intimate union of the chromatic constituent with the very body of the ground. These

characteristic qualities are beautifully shown in the case of the cameos having laminated grounds. Such grounds are made up of two or more superimposed layers of the ceramic paste, differently coloured. Generally they consisted of laminæ having different tints of blue; occasionally a

Fig. 8.—*Medallion, Head of Medusa; blue and white jasper, laminated ground.*

white layer occurs between two coloured layers. The extremely fine Medusa's Head (Fig. 8), taken originally from one of the Townley marbles and modelled by Flaxman, shows by its bevelled and polished edge that the solid jasper-ground to which the white relief has been

applied is of composite structure, consisting of three layers, the central one being dark blue, the others considerably lighter. In a few rare instances, chiefly of cameos for rings and pins, not only was the edge polished on the wheel, but the entire field also; such examples simulate very closely the appearance of the natural-banded onyx.

In Wedgwood's Catalogue, the sixth edition, published in 1787, Class II. comprised 275 subjects represented on medallions and tablets, many of large size. In addition to these, a good many fine plaques are known which do not appear in any edition of the Catalogues; some of them were undoubtedly modelled and issued after 1787. Amongst them may be named the two large tablets represented respectively in Plate II. and Fig. 9. The first of these plaques is the Sacrifice of Iphigenia, the design having been modelled in Rome, under the supervision of Flaxman, by the Italian sculptor Pacetti, from the relief on the front of the sarcophagus in which the Barberini or Portland Vase was found. This plaque is of large size, fifteen inches by six. The figures are white, relieved on a delicate greyish-green ground. So far as material and colour are concerned, this fine cameo is extremely beautiful. The heads are well modelled, and the expression of the faces aptly rendered, and if there be some defects in the drawing and a certain lack of restraint and breadth in the composition, one must remember that the original sculpture was executed at a time when the true antique feeling had been in some measure lost. Still, as an example of the complete command of the potter's art which Wedgwood had attained, this plaque is exceptionally important. It is interesting to note that there exists a slightly modified version of it, in which the nude figures are partially draped; the effect is less happy. It was a copy of this draped version which was sold in 1869 at Christie's for £121 16*s*. The specimen from which Plate II. is taken is in the Jermyn Street Museum. Fig. 9 is another example of Wedgwood's large jasper tablets, but in this instance the white figures are relieved on a black ground. This piece belongs to the period when Wedgwood had just completed his reproduction of the Portland Vase. The plaque from which the illustration is taken is in the collection of Mr. J. L. Propert. It is the largest known example of a black and white jasper tablet.

An interesting plaque modelled by Flaxman represents the conclusion of a commercial treaty between England and France: Mercury joins the hands of two symbolical figures who stand for the two countries. It is in very low relief, while the treatment of the draperies is so simple as to verge upon poverty of expression. It is, however, a characteristic example of the sculptor, and offers a remarkable contrast to the florid style of most of Pacetti's work, as illustrated by the Sacrifice of Iphigenia. Fig. 10 is taken from the example in Mr. Propert's collection. This work was modelled in 1787.

There is one group of figures produced in cameo form by Wedgwood which has been more frequently copied and imitated in various combinations and in various kinds of ware than any other design. It consists of three *amorini*, or rather "Bacchanalian Boys," instinct with life and *naïveté*. The modeller of the group and the author of the original drawing was Lady Diana Beauclerk. There is a particularly fine example in the South Kensington Museum of this beautiful plaque, the material being black and white jasper (Fig. 11). It is of the highest quality,—texture, tone and modelling being alike excellent. Bought in the year 1855, before the period when the productions of Josiah Wedgwood had regained the appreciation of connoisseurs, it was acquired for a few shillings. It is worth while comparing it with the copy made by Josiah Spode a few years subsequently, an example of which will be found on a jug of brown earthenware in the same museum.

Among the smaller cameos in jasper-dip which belong to a period subsequent to the year 1780, when Wedgwood's partner Bentley died, three examples have been selected for illustration. One of these, representing Achilles with the body of Hector, is given in Fig. 12. The specimen in Mr. Propert's collection has the field of an olive-green hue, while the border is black and white. Some exquisite examples of these choice tricoloured cameos are met with in cabinets: some were mounted in gold and set in small toilette and snuff-boxes of ivory. The subjects vary,—Aurora in her chariot, boys at play, and a sale of *amorini* being amongst the most frequent. Unfortunately their charms of colour and of tone do not lend themselves readily to any available processes of reproduction; the originals must be studied. Nor do

Fig. 9.—Plaque, Sacrifice to Hymen; black and white jasper.

A Zephyr.

Walter L. Colls, Ph. S.

A Sacrifice.

these pieces admit of satisfactory enlargement by photography. For, as already pointed out in the present chapter, the small and numerous details of these medallions betray the inadequacy of the granular paste to represent really minute and fine work directly one attempts to increase their apparent size. In this respect the jasper-body is greatly inferior

Fig. 10.—*Plaque, Treaty between France and England; blue and white jasper.*

to such natural substances as cornelian, sard, amethyst, aquamarine, &c., which are virtually homogeneous and textureless. The two other cameos or medallions mentioned in the preceding paragraph are represented of their original size on Plate III.; both are in the writer's collection. The upper medallion, of white on a rich blue ground of jasper-dip, is one of a set of four aerial figures with floating

draperies and wings of slightly varied design. The colour of the ground shows slightly through parts of the wings and draperies, and imparts to them a faintly diaphanous appearance, appropriate enough to the figure of a zephyr. The lower medallion is as fine a piece

Fig. 11.—*Medallion, Bacchanalian Boys; blue and white jasper.*

of work, in white on black jasper-dip, as Wedgwood ever produced. It should be called a "Monumental Group" rather than a "Sacrifice." A figure of Athene surmounts the pedestal in the centre: on the left a Victory offers drink to a serpent; while on the right stands a soldier

symbolising a warrior who had fallen in battle. A similar commemorative group will be found upon a marble in the Phigaleian Room of the British Museum. This was presented in the year 1780, and may possibly have suggested the design of the above-described medallion to Flaxman, whose work it seems to be. There may, however, exist an antique original agreeing more closely with the modern composition. But whatever the origin of its motive, there can be no

Fig. 12.—*Medallion, Achilles with the body of Hector; green, black ana white jasper.*

question that this particular cameo unites beauty of arrangement to refinement of material and execution in a very high degree. These small and elegant works of art were intended by their producer to be mounted in many different ways, not only in jewellery with borders of gold, silver, cut steel, ormolu, but also in cabinet-work, such as buffets, chairs, coffers, harpsichords, and tea-caddies. They were actually used for all these purposes, and for many others : a long list of their various applications will be found in Miss Meteyard's *Handbook* (p. 76).

The larger plaques, described previously, were intended, so Wedgwood tell us, not only as cabinet pictures but for the enrichment of important articles of furniture, and more particularly for the

decoration of mantelpieces. Many of them are still to be found *in situ* in the fireplaces for which they were originally made, but the majority of those which have survived the vicissitudes of time have been gathered into the collections of public and private museums. The suites of mantelpiece tablets generally consisted of five pieces, occasionally of seven. The central feature of the arrangement was an important plaque of considerable length: on either side of this was a smaller plaque or frieze; at each angle a circular medallion. A number of mantelpiece suites in blue and white jasper and in white biscuit were included in the sale at Christie's of the stock of ornamental pieces which remained in the warehouse on the death of Bentley. This auction took place in 1781; it is interesting to note the prices which these beautiful pieces then realised. Thus lot 451, in which the long tablet of the Choice of Hercules formed the central member, and which was accompanied by a pair of heads of Medusa and a pair of Bacchanalian figures, brought two guineas and a half, the warehouse price having been fixed at £6 15*s*. A favourite plaque for the decoration of these mantelpieces was an enlarged copy of the Marlborough gem representing the Marriage of Cupid and Psyche. This cinque-cento cameo was reproduced in many different sizes. Fig. 13 is taken from the large and fine specimen in the British Museum. Other tablets, made chiefly for the same purpose, and produced in considerable numbers and of important dimensions, were the following:—A Bacchanalian Triumph, taken from the Borghese Vase in the Museum of the Louvre; An Offering to Flora, modelled by Bacon in 1778; The Apotheosis of Homer, modelled by Flaxman from a vase painting; The Nine Muses, modelled by Flaxman; The Dancing Hours, designed by Flaxman in 1776; Priam begging the Body of Hector from Achilles, modelled by Pacetti from the bas-relief at the back of the Barberini sarcophagus, but with some modifications of the original design; A Group of Bacchanalian Boys under an arbour with festoons of panther skins, by Lady Diana Beauclerk; The Apotheosis of Virgil, modelled by Flaxman; Hercules in the Garden of the Hesperides, modelled by Flaxman in 1787 from an antique vase now in the British Museum; Achilles and the Daughter of Lycomedes, modelled by Davaere; The

Fig. 13.—Plaque, Marriage of Cupid and Psyche; blue and white jasper.

Judgment of Paris. All these tablets were produced on a large scale, the length of the extant examples in the jasper-body of those above named ranging from 12 inches to 26 inches, and the height from $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 8 inches. But these dimensions were considerably exceeded in a few instances. Thus a tablet in blue and white jasper, sold in 1880 at Christie's, was 26 inches long by 11 inches high. It represented A Sacrifice to Hymen, and was made in the year 1787. This example brought no less a sum than £415.

CHAPTER VIII

HIS PORTRAIT CAMEOS AND MEDALLIONS

Historical Series; Heads of "Illustrious Modern Personages"; Identification of the Subjects; Unusually Large Cameos; Variety in Subject and Treatment; Models by Flaxman, Hackwood, and others.

In Wedgwood's Catalogue the portraits are grouped under Classes III. to X., the most important and interesting examples belonging, however, to one only of these classes, namely, the last. Wedgwood tells us that he aimed at producing "regular biographical suites of distinguished characters, in different ages and nations, for the illustration of that pleasing and instructive history"; he adds, "With this view he has been at considerable expense in collecting, repairing, modelling, and arranging portraits of illustrious men, both of ancient and modern times. The present class (III.) contains those of Greece, Egypt, and the neighbouring states, in chronological order. The four following classes exhibit a complete series of the Roman history, from the foundation of Rome to the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople. The thread of history is continued, in the two next classes, by a set of the popes, and of all the kings and queens of England and France; and the more recent periods of history are illustrated, in the succeeding one, by a considerable number of princes, statesmen, philosophers, poets, artists, and other eminent men, down to the present time. These portraits are made, both in the basalt and jasper, with coloured grounds. Their general size is 2 in. × 1¾ in." A somewhat larger size with a rim is common; it measures ¾ inches more in each direction. Most of the specimens in Classes III. to IX. are in black basalt ware: in comparatively rare instances only have they much artistic merit, out the several series, when properly arranged in the trays of a coin-cabinet, possess a certain educational value.

With the medallion portraits of Class X.—the "Heads of Illustrious Moderns"—we enter upon the consideration of the most interesting group of Wedgwood's productions. The majority of the specimens preserved in museums or the cabinets of collectors are in white and blue jasper, those with black, green or pink grounds are not common. A few are wholly white. There exist also a considerable number of these medallions in black basalt. Some of these, large ovals of 4 inches by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches with moulded borders, are favourable specimens of this class of work. Amongst good examples of this size the portraits of William Penn, Olden Barneveldt, Benjamin Franklin, and Admiral Lord Duncan may be mentioned. The last-named portrait, with others, equally well modelled, of the three Admirals Howe, Saint Vincent, and Nelson, were probably (with the exception of Howe) produced after Wedgwood's death.

The portraits of this class were modelled in some instances from the life by modellers employed by Wedgwood. A good many, also taken from the life, were the independent work of such artists as James Tassie, Isaac Gosset and Eley George Mountstephen, but were reproduced in the jasper-body by Wedgwood from casts taken from the originals. Medals, paintings, and engravings also furnished the materials from which the artists employed in the pottery worked.

In one of the volumes named in the *Bibliographical Notes*, the catalogue compiled by Mr. C. T. Gatty for the Wedgwood Exhibition of the Liverpool Art Club, the difficulty in the way of identifying very many of the extant portraits belonging to Class X. is distinctly brought out. Mr. Gatty describes the exceptionally full means for naming the portraits which he enjoyed. For instance, he was able to refer to a series of casts from the old moulds at Etruria, and 600 of these had the names scratched upon them. In spite of the help thus afforded, and that obtained from other sources, Mr. Gatty is compelled to confess that a very large number of portraits remained unknown. He succeeded, however, in naming a fair proportion of those which had become anonymous, and in revising several incorrect attributions.

A few of his cameo portraits were made by Wedgwood of unusually large dimensions and in very high relief; but the known examples are extremely rare. They were ovals averaging $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches

in dimensions. Amongst them we find the following—Robert Boyle, Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Joseph Priestley, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Joseph Banks, and Dr. Daniel Charles Solander. It is unfortunate that two fine specimens of these blue and white jasper cameos, portraits of Newton and Locke, perished in the Alexandra Palace

Fig. 14.—Medallion, Sir F. W. Herschel; blue and white jasper.

fire of 1873. There are several in the British Museum, presented by Mr. A. W. Franks.

It is an extremely difficult matter to select typical examples of these portrait cameos for illustration, not because one's choice is limited, but because there are characteristic qualities of modelling and finish, quite apart from variations in opacity and colour, which need, for their adequate representation, the inclusion not of five or six specimens, but of a score.

Fig 14, taken from the medallion in the Jermyn Street collection, represents the astronomer Sir F. W Herschel. It was modelled by John Flaxman in 1781, when his sitter was forty-three years of age. The planets and their orbits shown in the field are Saturn and Uranus, the latter having been discovered on the 13th of March, 1781. In the next illustration (Fig. 15) a characteristic portrait of Dr. Samuel Johnson appears; Mr. J. L. Propert owns the particularly fine example from which this figure was taken. This model was made by Flaxman in 1784, the year of Dr. Johnson's death. A very different man in a very different sphere of activity was Edward Bourne. His portrait (Fig. 16), also from Mr. Propert's choice collection, was the work of one of Wedgwood's own modellers at Etruria, William Hackwood. In two letters to Bentley, written in 1779, Wedgwood mentions this portrait as that of "Edward Bourne, my old bricklayer"; adding, "Old Bourne's medallion is the man himself, with every wrinkle, crink, and cranny in the whole visage." On the truncation of the bust, scratched with a fine point in the jasper-paste before the piece was fired, one can read the signature and date, "Wm. Hackwood, 1779." A portrait remarkable for its extremely high and deep under-cutting is that of Ferdinand I. of the Two Sicilies, and IV. of Naples. It was derived from an Italian contemporary medal. Fig. 17, taken from Mr. Propert's example of this cameo, scarcely gives an adequate idea of the way in which the head stands out, almost detached, from the ground. Such work is not only difficult of execution, but is peculiarly liable to distortion and to the formation of fire-cracks in the kiln. For these reasons such medallions were produced in very small numbers. A remarkably fine piece of work, as regards both colour and size, is the portrait of the Empress of Russia, Catherine II. The ground here

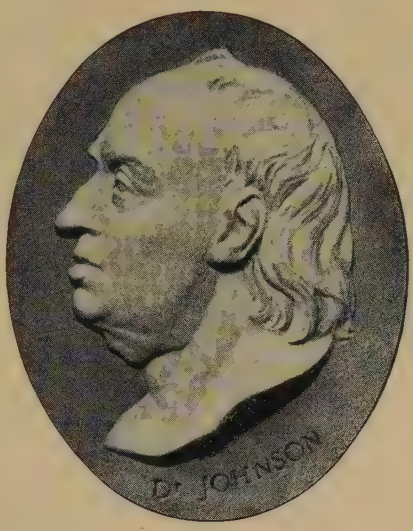

Fig. 15.—Medallion, Dr. Johnson; blue and white jasper.

(Fig. 18) is of a very rare hue, an exceedingly dark olive-green. The illustration is also from Mr. Propert's collection. This portrait is derived from a gem engraved by Maria Foedorowna, afterwards Empress of Russia.

It would occupy far too much space to attempt to give even a mere list of the "illustrious moderns" whom Wedgwood has immortalised in clay. They include princes, statesmen, lawyers, naval and military commanders, philosophers, poets, naturalists, travellers and physicians.

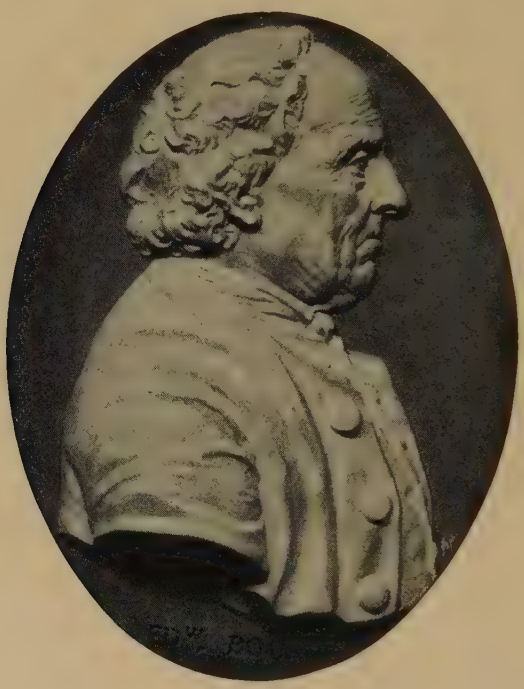

Fig. 16.—Medallion, E. Bourne; blue and white jasper.

Painters, architects and antiquaries, divines and men of letters, as well as many ladies of rank or beauty, are also represented. The unknown and obscure have likewise their place in the long series. But although I cannot venture to give a tithe of the many famous names in the list, it will be of some service to collectors and connoisseurs if a small number of these portraits in this class, which can be assigned to particular artists, be here recorded. The names given are derived from the correspondence and accounts of Wedgwood, and in a few instances from signatures on

the moulds or cameo impressions. Several modellers are represented so far as these sources of information are concerned, by no more than a single portrait. Thus to Burch, one version of the head of George III. belongs; to M. Gosset, one of the two likenesses of George II.; to T. Pingo, a second portrait of George III.; to James Tassie, the likeness of a painter, James Byres; to Joachim Smith, one of the two portraits of Josiah Wedgwood; to Lewis Francis Roubiliac, the head of the Duke of Marlborough. The name of the medallist Renaud is found

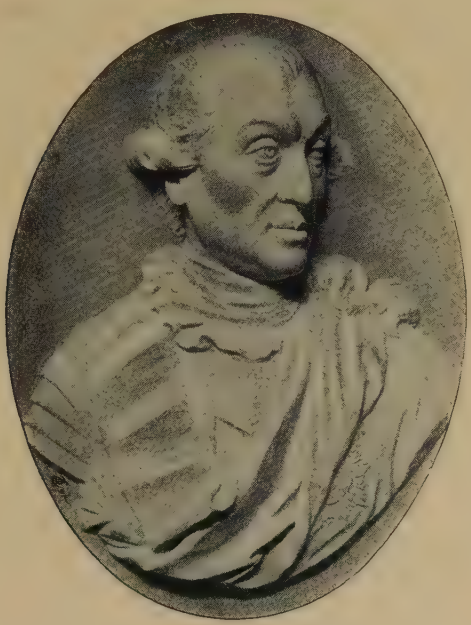

Fig. 17.—Medallion, King of the Two Sicilies; blue and white jasper.

upon the portrait of Louis XVI. of France, that of J B. Nini upon that of Marie Antoinette. Wedgwood's chief modeller of likenesses, William Hackwood, doubtless produced a very great number of these cameos, but very few bear his signature. Amongst these may be mentioned those of Edward Bourne, Reverend William Willet, and Voltaire; one of the likenesses of Wedgwood, and a third version of that of George III. But far less incomplete information is available with regard to the assistance afforded by John Flaxman in this

department of Wedgwood's productions. To him may be assigned the following portraits amongst a large number which are also undoubtedly his work :—Lord Amherst, Sir Joseph Banks, Mrs. Barbauld, T. O. Bergman, A. K. Boerhaave, Earl of Chatham, Sir William Chambers, Queen Charlotte, Captain Cook, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, Duchess of Devonshire, General G. A. Eliott, Dr. J. Fothergill, David Garrick,

Fig. 18.—Medallion, Catherine II. of Russia; dark green and white jasper.

George III., Sir W. Hamilton, Warren Hastings, Sir F. W. Herschel, Admiral Viscount Hood, Dr. Samuel Johnson, E. Kæmpfer, Admiral Viscount Keppel, Earl Mansfield, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord North, Hon. William Pitt, Queen of Portugal, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Marquis of Rockingham, Mrs. Siddons, Dr. D. C. Solander, and the King of Sweden.

Before leaving this part of the subject, mention should be made of the occurrence, on the backs of a small number of copies of the portraits in the jasper-body, of inscriptions relating to the materials used. The particulars given do not convey any precise information to the ceramist of to-day, for the key wherewith to unlock their secrets is lacking. But these rudely incised memoranda, as to the materials of the paste and the colouring wash or dip applied to the surface, afford proofs of the constant care bestowed by Wedgwood in order to secure the technical perfection of the jasper-body and the continuous development of its artistic capacities. The citation of a few of these inscriptions will suffice to explain the nature of the information afforded by these experimental records. Thus on a portrait with a pink ground of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick in the Mayer Collection occur the words "Wash light laloc, 3,624. Head and ground, one of 1,559 and one of 3,614, with cobalt in it." On a cameo with a green ground representing Lord Camelford, we find "Wash made 3 of old 3,681, wash 2 of 1,605 mended." A third inscription of the same character occurs on a blue and white jasper cameo of John Locke. "Head and Ground 1 of 3,614 and 1 of 1,559, Wash 1 of the above and one of new F wash." One may learn from these particulars, that Wedgwood sometimes whitened his pastes by neutralising their yellowness by means of cobalt; that he numbered and preserved for future reference supplies of his jasper paste of known composition; and that his trials of variations in the components both of body and of wash must have been exceedingly numerous. The marks T B O and T T B O found on some pieces relate to the position of the specimens in the kiln, and may be expanded respectively into Top of Biscuit Oven, and Tip Top of Biscuit Oven. By one writer they were mistaken for the signature of an artist named Tebo, who is known to have been employed at Etruria.

CHAPTER IX

VASES IN THE JASPER-BODY

Not made before 1781; *Period of Perfection; Decadence; Designs of Vases and Pedestals; Wedgwood's letter of* 1786 *to Sir W. Hamilton; Prices of fine Examples; Conventional Ornaments.*

Although ornamental vases of other materials had been made long before 1781, it was not until that year that Wedgwood began producing them in his jasper-paste: this was after the death of Bentley. It is to be noted that no examples of these fine examples of Wedgwood's skill were included in the sale at Christie's (in 1781), to which reference has previously been made. It had doubtless been found that the black basalt vases with reliefs of the same material, or with encaustic paintings, as well as the variegated vases of which Wedgwood constituted his Class IX. under the designation of "Vases in glazed Terra-Cotta, imitating Crystalline Agates" did not meet with a very ready sale. Something fresh was needed to attract the public eye. The solid jasper-body had been invented several years before, but had been used almost exclusively for flat cameos and plaques. The jasper-dip or washed jasper had been but recently perfected, and its gamut of colours had not yet been completed. There was required but a single step to transfer to a rounded surface the reliefs which had hitherto been prepared for one that was flat. It is probable that the first vases made of the jasper-body were produced in the solid variety, but this was soon in great measure displaced by the kind in which the surface only was tinctured with colour, and which was capable of realising more delicate and varied effects of hue and tone. Jasper vases were first exhibited to the public in the early part of 1782 in the show-rooms in Greek Street, Soho. The forms, generally derived

more or less directly from the antique, were for the most part satisfactory in outline and proportion: the sizes varied, and sometimes attained considerable dimensions, a few specimens being 18 inches or even more in height. Many of the subjects in white relief, with which these vases were decorated, had been previously employed for tablets, but others were specially modelled for the purpose. Flaxman's designs were extensively employed. The manufacture of these fine vases, and the introduction of new types with frequent re-arrangements of the ornamental details, continued on an increasing scale from 1782 until the death of Wedgwood in 1795. For a few years after the latter date, very fine examples were turned out from the works, the original moulds with the old staff of skilled workmen and modellers being of course still available. But the loss of the master soon made itself felt. The guiding and controlling spirit was gone. Refinement of material, care in execution and delicacy of colour were no longer demanded in the same uncompromising manner as heretofore. There soon set in a mechanical and artistic decadence from which any recovery that may have been made during the present century was never more than partial and spasmodic.

Many of the more important jasper vases were accompanied by pedestals of the same material and colour: as a rule these additions detracted from the beauty of the pieces they were intended to improve, being incongruous in design or scale. A single example will suffice to illustrate this point. Thus a vase is well known of excellent proportions and no less than 18 inches in height. It has well-formed handles with twining serpents, and round the body a Bacchanalian frieze adapted from that on the Borghese Vase in the Louvre. It stands on a turned base and has a plinth of suitable dimensions. But its pedestal is much too big for it, no less than 11½ inches high. Moreover this pedestal is decorated with Bacchanalian trophies and festoons of vines in such high relief and of such large proportions as entirely to dwarf the chief decorative elements of the vase itself, a single vine leaf on the former being four times the size of the heads on the latter. Incongruity of subject between vase and pedestal, though less immediately obvious than disproportion in size and discord of curve, often becomes painfully marked on careful examination.

Thus a vase bearing the subject of the "Infant Academy," and decorated with graceful floral festoons, is placed on a square stand which has on alternate faces groups of military trophies and figures of warriors. In some cases of pairs of vases the design on one was of an entirely different class and style to that on the other. Thus we find "Hercules in the Garden of the Hesperides" on one vase, while its companion bears a "Group of Bacchanalian Boys" from the design of Lady Diana Beauclerk.

It would be tedious to enumerate the many subjects which are found upon the jasper vases: a large proportion had previously appeared on the medallions and plaques. Apollo and the Nine Muses, the Dancing Hours, Blindman's Buff, and the Apotheosis of Homer—all from the designs of Flaxman—are of frequent occurrence. Fig. 19 is a characteristic example of the adaptation to the round of the first-named of the above designs, and is taken from the Jermyn Street specimen. It is an oviform amphora in pale blue jasper with cameo figures in white, and is $15\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height: its greatest diameter is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The body is ornamented with a frieze of figures representing Apollo and the Nine Muses in white on a granulated blue ground: it is noticeable that parts of the relief foliage above the figures is of the same colour and substance as the ground. The handles are white of floriated design; the cover is surmounted by a white figure of Pegasus: the square plinth has an anthemion border. There is in the British Museum a vase of rather larger size than that shown in Fig. 19, but resembling it in colour and in some of its details, and also having the same Pegasus cover. Moreover it is peculiarly interesting because it was presented to the museum by Wedgwood and described by him in a letter to Sir W. Hamilton under the date June 24, 1786. He there states distinctly that in his jasper work every ornament and leaf is first made in a separate mould and then laid upon the ground with great care and accuracy and "afterwards wrought over again upon the vase itself by an artist equal to the work." He goes on to say, "from the beginning I determined to spare neither time nor expense in modelling and finishing my ornaments," and adds that he has presented to the British Museum the finest and most perfect vase he has ever made, mentioning that this specimen "is 18 inches high and the price twenty guineas." It is scarcely necessary to remark that such a

Fig. 19.—*Vase, Apollo and the Muses; blue and white jasper.*

vase would bring several times that sum at the present time. A specimen of the type and size shown in Fig. 19 fetched £68 5*s* at the sale of the Barlow Collection in 1869, where also a particularly sumptuous though smaller vase, with Flaxman's Dancing Hours, realised no less than £131. The prices were however greatly exceeded at the sale of the collection of Dr. Sibson eight years afterwards, when one of the large "Homeric" vases of white and black jasper-dip brought no less than £735, passing into the collection of Lord Tweedmouth. The subject on this vase was the "Apotheosis of Homer" by Flaxman. The cover was surmounted by a Pegasus. The accompanying square pedestal bore reliefs representing Sacrifices to Flora and to Cupid, and was decorated with white griffins at the angles ; the height of the whole was nearly 25 inches. A similar and companion vase with the "Apotheosis of Virgil" was in the collection of the late T. Shadford Walker, of Liverpool. These unusually large vases in black and white jasper were not made before the period 1789–1791 : copies are of extreme rarity. In fact the smaller vases ranging in height from 5 or 6 inches to a foot were always produced in far larger numbers than any of those described in this paragraph.

Besides vases in white on blue and white on black, the other colours described in Chapter V. were also applied in the adornment of these objects. Many examples with white reliefs on a green or a lilac ground occur. There are numerous varieties of hue and tint on these pieces, the green being sobered by the presence of much grey and ranging from a sage hue to one in which there is a good deal of yellow, while the lilac is sometimes pinkish and sometimes bluish. Some tricoloured combinations are also met with corresponding with the tricoloured medallions described in Chapter VII. ; a few vases have three colours in addition to white. In such cases the happiest effects are perhaps realised by means of chequer work and other conventional designs rather than by the introduction of figure subjects. For when the latter are associated with much decorative detail executed in a variety of attractive hues, the entire composition frequently lacks repose and breadth.

During the last two or three years of his life it would seem that Wedgwood sparingly introduced gilding (duly burnt in) into the decoration of a very few of his jasper vases in white and deep lapis or mazarine blue.

CHAPTER X

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTIONS IN JASPER

Chessmen; Match-pots, Pedestals, and Drums; Pipe-bowls and Hookahs; Tea and Coffee Sets; Salt-cellars; Bulb-stands and Flower-pots; Lamps and Candlesticks; Scent-bottles; Bell-pulls.

WEDGWOOD applied his jasper-body with great ingenuity, fertility of resource, and good taste, to the production of an extraordinary number of objects of utility or luxury, personal or domestic. Many indeed, though not all, of these articles had been made by him in the other bodies which he had perfected, such as cream-ware, terra-cotta and black basalt, but these materials were inferior to jasper in *quality* of colour, and did not admit of equal richness and variety in decorative treatment. Of these objects, excluding cameos, medallions, plaques, and vases, to which several preceding Chapters have been devoted, the famous chessmen designed by Flaxman in 1785 demand prominent notice. The original drawing for the set is still at Etruria; for it Flaxman's charge was six guineas. In accord with the origin and character of the game, the style adopted by the artist for these figures is distinctively mediæval and not classical. Many of the pieces, notably the king, queen, and bishop, are well adapted, by the simplicity of their contours, for the purpose for which they were intended. But their liability to break, and the difficulty experienced in handling many of them would alone suffice to prevent their use by chess-players. The two sides were made in olive green and lilac, in black and white, and in blue and white. The old specimens form a beautiful suite of ornaments for the cabinet, the modern replicas are rough in texture and defective as to their minuter details and the modelling of the faces.

Wedgwood produced an enormous number of pedestals, drums,

match-pots, and other cylindrical pieces. Flaxman's group of "Blind Man's Buff" lent itself charmingly to the adornment of these pieces of a round form. The Figs. 20 and 21 represent a pair of stands for vases in the South Kensington Museum; they are in white on a ground of sage-green. They were purchased for the collection in 1855, at a time when Wedgwood's productions were less esteemed than they are now; still one is surprised to find from the labels that the Museum gave no more than ten pounds for this important pair of pedestals. Many of the smaller objects in this group were intended to be mounted in ormolu as candelabra: they are frequently found decorated with cut glass pendants. The four-sided altar-shaped pedestals with bases rather wider than the tops, and the cylindrical drums with small cameo figures in white on blue, or with chequer-work of two colours and white, make particularly beautiful supports for a gilt bronze and glass superstructure, provided the design of the latter is kept sufficiently simple.

For the Eastern markets Wedgwood provided vessels in jasper to be used in the hookah or hubble-bubble: these have sometimes been mistaken for lamp-reservoirs. A few pipe bowls for tobacco also exist; they may have been more abundant once, as they are peculiarly liable to injury and accident.

Tea and coffee sets, including oval trays for the whole equipage, cups and saucers, bowls and sugar-basins, with tea-pots and coffee-pots, were made in an immense variety of forms and in all the colours of which the jasper-body was susceptible. The bowl, Fig. 22, is of white jasper so translucent as to show, even in the illustration, that the light is transmitted through its substance, as is indicated by the paler tone of grey in the central part of the bottom of the vessel. The festoons of ivy are in solid jasper of an olive hue; the berries being lilac; the pendent medallions have a lilac ground. The original specimen is in the Jermyn Street Museum. The covered sugar-basin, Fig. 23, is at South Kensington. It is introduced here as an example rather of one of Wedgwood's favourite shapes and simpler styles of ornament, not on account of any particularly high quality of the material, which approaches in character stoneware rather than jasper. It was probably made during the first quarter of the present century; the body is of a pale olive hue, the reliefs are lilac. An example of a saucer almost too heavily laden

with ornament is furnished, from the same gallery as the last example, by Fig. 24. It is of jasper-dip, the ground being sage-green, the

Fig. 20.—Pedestal, Blind Man's Buff; green and white jasper.

medallions white on lilac. This specimen belongs to the latest period of Wedgwood's life, if indeed it is not to be dated a few years after his death, for there is a lack of fineness in the paste and of sharpness in the

reliefs. Some of the tea-cups with flutings of blue and white, acanthus leaf borders, and white reliefs of children at play, are simply perfect in

Fig. 21.—*Pedestal, Blind Man's Buff; green and white jasper.*

all respects. They, as well as the salt-cellars, were often polished on the inside by means of the lapidary's wheel.

Many different forms of pots for growing bulbs, such as the hyacinth,

Fig. 22.—Bowl, Ivy festoons and pendent cameos; white, green and lilac jasper.

Fig. 23.—Sugar-Basin and Cover, Vine pattern; pale olive and lilac.

tulip, and crocus, and for flowering plants, were made in the jasper-body. Wedgwood's good taste in the matter of decoration was apparent in these works, for he was careful to select such ornamental motives as would not clash with nor overpower the foliage and blossoms to be associated with these vessels. The slight concave curvature which he

Fig. 24.—Saucer, Festoons and Cameos; white, green and lilac jasper.

gave to the flowerpots relieved them from the ordinary prosaic appearance of such things, while the rims were made so solid as to be proof against any ordinary blow. The material and the workmanship were of the highest quality, quite equal to those of the best ornamental vases. But nowadays while an old jasper vase four inches high of

Wedgwood's period of perfection cannot be bought for less than ten pounds, a flowerpot of the same quality and pattern may be acquired for two pounds or even less. The illustration given in Fig. 24 happens to be derived not from a specimen in jasper, but from one made of a very fine kind of terra-cotta, but it is equally adapted to demonstrate the beauty and simplicity of a form and decorative treatment originated by Wedgwood. It is of cane-colour with reliefs in a sober greenish grey. The design of these reliefs is taken from the common hard-fern,

Fig. 25.—Flower-pot and Saucer, reliefs of fern-leaves; cane-colour terra-cotta.

Blechnum boreale. Wedgwood of course made flowerpots in other wares besides jasper, using cream-ware, pebble-ware, black basalt, and red terra-cotta, variously decorated with engine-turning, and with raised designs and paintings of many kinds. This was also the case with his bulb-stands, and with his bough-pots for cut flowers and foliage. But the multiplicity of his patterns in these classes baffles any attempt at adequate description.

A pair of picturesque candlesticks with white figures and foliage on a ground of blue are in Mr. Propert's collection (Figs. 26 and 27). They were selected for illustration on account of their differing widely

in style from the classical and highly conventionalised designs with which we have been previously dealing. But Wedgwood in this section of his productions exhibited as much fertility of resource and sense of fitness as in any of the groups already discussed. His pillar candlesticks are models of simplicity, and so also are his taper-holders. The lamps

Figs. 26, 27.—*Pair of Candlesticks, Children and Trees; blue and white jasper.*

designed after antique patterns are, however, for the most part cabinet objects, and are not fitted for everyday use.

One word about scent-bottles. These dainty pieces, often with polished edges and mountings of gold, have always been highly appre-

ciated. They vary in size and shape, but were generally made in solid blue jasper with figures or portraits of white in low relief; they sometimes are bordered with conventional designs also in white.

Oviform handles for bell-ropes were made in considerable numbers and in queen's ware as well as in jasper. They were decorated in a simple and appropriate manner; there is a representative series of specimens in the Liverpool Museum.

Nothing has been said, for the limitations of space forbid the further extension of this chapter, of watch-backs, earrings, opera-glass mounts, and a number of other minor objects of decoration or utility for which Wedgwood employed with success his beautiful jasper paste.

CHAPTER XI

LATER YEARS

The Brick House; Marriage; Partnership with Thomas Wedgwood; Purchase of the Site of "Etruria"; Grand Trunk Canal; London Show Room; a Surgical Operation; Partnership with Thomas Bentley; Etruria, the Village, the Works, the Hall; Josiah Wedgwood and Richard Champion; Scientific Work; Death; Portraits.

It seemed advisable, on several grounds, to describe in successive chapters the chief materials and productions of Wedgwood's manufactory, although this treatment of the subject involved a long break in our brief narrative of the potter's life. This we may now resume by mentioning that at least as early as the year 1762, about three years after his first start as an independent manufacturer, Wedgwood, finding it necessary to occupy larger premises than heretofore, rented the Brick House and Works in Burslem, which he retained until his final and complete removal to Etruria in 1773. To the dwelling-house attached to these potworks, Wedgwood brought his bride, Sarah Wedgwood, a cousin, the daughter of Richard Wedgwood, of Spen Green. The wedding took place on the 25th January, 1764, in the parish church of Astbury, Cheshire. This marriage was altogether happy, Mrs. Wedgwood fully sympathising with her husband's varied tastes, employments, and aspirations, and yet devoting herself with exemplary diligence to all domestic and maternal duties. Their direct descendants during the last one hundred years have continued the labours which the death of Josiah Wedgwood in 1795 might have interrupted.

The year 1766 was marked by the partnership then arranged between Josiah Wedgwood and his cousin Thomas, who had been employed in the works since 1759. As before mentioned he had been previously engaged at the Worcester china factory; he was a skilful potter, and became superintendent of the department of the "useful

works" both at Burslem and afterwards at Etruria. This partnership was dissolved only by the death of Thomas Wedgwood in 1788. In the same year, 1766, Wedgwood succeeded in acquiring a suitable site in the neighbourhood of Burslem for a new factory and dwelling-house. He says in a letter to Bentley, under the date July 18, "I have now bought the estate I mentioned to you, for which I am to pay £3,000 at Michaelmas next." Subsequently he acquired from another land-owner a considerable addition to his domain, so that its area sufficed not only for the erection of a village for his workmen, and an extensive potworks, furnished with many new and costly appliances, but also for a mansion for himself surrounded by spacious grounds, as well as a good house for his partner Bentley. It must indeed have been a prosperous business which Wedgwood had created, for it to have yielded him, in the brief space of ten years, the large profits necessary to carry out the immense undertaking which he had now commenced. For three years after his purchase of the "Ridge House" Estate, his new Etruria Works were opened. The formal inauguration took place on June 13th, 1769, Wedgwood himself "throwing" on the wheel the first six vases. Some of these are still preserved. They are of black basalt, painted with figures in the antique style in two tones of red, and bear the legend "Artes Etruriae Renascuntur." In form, and in the finish of their encaustic decoration they were greatly improved upon in the course of a year or two, but they are of considerable interest as being almost the only dated specimens of Wedgwood's time still extant; they consequently serve to fix the period in which more advanced work of the same character and material was produced at Etruria.

Wedgwood at the time of his commencement of his new works at Etruria was busy also in furthering the facilities of water carriage in his district. His sound sense and foresight had been of great service in settling the plans of certain sections of the Grand Trunk Canal in the year 1765, when his knowledge of the requirements of the district of the Potteries had proved extremely useful to the Duke of Bridgewater's engineer James Brindley. Mr. Bentley and Dr. Darwin were also both in consultation on this matter with Wedgwood, whose promptitude in proving the weakness of rival schemes, and judicious advocacy in influential quarters of the plan finally adopted, were

of incalculable value in securing a favourable issue when the Bill for authorizing the canal was under discussion in Parliament. It is characteristic of Wedgwood, shrewd man of business though he was, that he demurred to the prosaic directness of the course of that part of the canal which passed through his newly acquired estate. In 1767 he wrote to Bentley, saying, "Mr. Henshall and I spent yesterday and to-day at Hetruria in setting out the canal through that district, and on Monday next I shall begin to make it. The fields are so very level that the canal will run in a straight line through them, at least so it is set out, for I could not prevail on that Vandal to give me *one line* of Grace—he must go the nearest and best way or Mr. Brindley would go mad."

The variety of important matters which engaged Wedgwood's attention at this time—1767–8—was indeed considerable. For besides the canal and the founding of Etruria, he was endeavouring to secure an adequate showroom and depôt in the Metropolis for his productions. The room in Charles Street, Grosvenor Square did not allow of the exhibition of many sets of dinner and dessert services and of vases, and no one knew better than Wedgwood the importance of space for the proper display and arrangement of his wares. One likely house after another was inspected until in August 1768 some premises at the top of St. Martin's Lane were finally secured at an annual rent of one hundred guineas. In the midst of all these and many other occupations Wedgwood become convinced of the necessity of having his right leg amputated. He foresaw that in superintending the work in the large establishment which he was about to found at Etruria the retention of this useless and often painful member would be a serious encumbrance. On May 28, 1768, the operation was successfully performed, the patient making a rapid recovery, thanks in great measure to the assiduous care of his wife, and the cheerful companionship of his friend Thomas Bentley, who remained with him until all danger was over. The name of this friend has been frequently mentioned before in this essay; and it is now time to give a few particulars concerning one with whom for eighteen of the most active years of his life Wedgwood was continuously consulting and corresponding.

The first meeting between Josiah Wedgwood and his future friend and partner Thomas Bentley, took place at Liverpool, in 1762. Wedgwood had again injured his knee during a journey to that town, and in consequence placed himself under the care of a very competent and well-informed surgeon there, Mr. Matthew Turner. The doctor effected the introduction of the two men; henceforward they became firmly attached friends, serving one another with zeal and in many different ways. They were nearly of the same age; in love for art, in business capacity, and in their generosity and public spirit, they had many characteristics in common. Bentley possessed accomplishments which the somewhat untoward circumstances in which Wedgwood's early years were passed had prevented him from acquiring. He had spent some time on the Continent and spoke fluently both French and Italian, and was a fair classical scholar. His house in Liverpool became the meeting-place of many distinguished scientific and literary men, while his polished manners and his deep and intelligent interest in the public questions of the day brought him into contact with a large number of the conspicuous and wealthy men of the district. Thomas Bentley was in no way connected, so far at least as has been ascertained, with the famous critic Richard Bentley, who was sixty-nine years old when Wedgwood's future partner was born. Bentley introduced Wedgwood to many of his friends, including Dr. Priestley, the celebrated discoverer of oxygen, Dr. Aikin, and a number of ingenious persons engaged in various kinds of literary, scientific, and artistic labours. Some were surveyors, engineers and mechanicians; some painters and engravers; of their talents in not a few instances, Wedgwood, in after years, made good use. Bentley was a merchant and warehouseman in an extensive way of business, and in this capacity also his association with Wedgwood exercised a considerable influence upon the growing prosperity of the master-potter. Negotiations for a partnership between them were opened by Wedgwood in 1766, but it was not until November 14, 1768, that the arrangements were finally completed, Bentley acquiring an equal share in the profits arising from the sale of ornamental as distinguished from useful ware. On articles belonging to the former class the stamp impressed bore the names "Wedgwood and Bentley," sometimes abbreviated into "W. and B.," but occasionally altogether omitted. Bentley left Liverpool, though not

finally, in 1768, and occasionally resided in the Brick House at Burslem, a dwelling attached to one of the factories then occupied by Wedgwood. A residence was being built for him at this time close to the new potworks of Etruria, but the greatly increased demand for ornamental vases of Wedgwood's make compelled him to change his plans, and to migrate to London, where he established himself in rooms over the warehouse rented by Wedgwood in Newport Street. Another move soon followed. A house and garden at Chelsea were obtained on lease dated 22nd of September, 1669, the year in which the original China works there were sold to William Duesbury of Derby. Here Bentley took up his quarters, which were conveniently situated, for they enabled him to superintend the enamelling branch of the factory, which had been for some time conducted in the inconvenient premises of Newport Street, but was now to be better housed at Chelsea. The tenure of these Chelsea premises did not last long, for in 1774 Bentley removed his family and the enamelling business to Greek Street, Soho. Many of the letters written by Wedgwood to Bentley are preserved; selections from this interesting correspondence have been printed by Miss Meteyard in her "Life of Wedgwood." Bentley died on the 26th of November, 1780, to the great sorrow of his friend and partner. He was buried in Chiswick Church, where there is a monument to his memory by Scheemakers. The inscription which it bears, though somewhat rhetorical and exaggerated in expression, offers a warm and well-deserved tribute to his high qualities of head and heart.

The death of Bentley was felt acutely by his surviving friend and partner. But Wedgwood continued his work with unabated industry and enthusiasm, losing no opportunity to extend his business and to develop at the same time the perfection and artistic merit of his manufacture. It has already been pointed out that the production of vases in the jasper body was subsequent to the death of Bentley, and that many of the most beautiful medallions and plaques, more particularly those in jasper dip, were made between the years 1781 and 1795. Yet it must be borne in mind that not only were a vast number and great variety of fine things in variegated and black ware made during the term of the partnership, but that the splendid suites of mantelpiece plaques originated during the same period. We are able to fix the

dates of some of these sets, partly by means of the extant invoices of the modellers and other artists employed, partly by the entries in the sale catalogue of 1781, and by those in the several editions of the firm's own catalogue published during Bentley's lifetime, and partly by actual examples of these suites known to have been made in particular years. Thus there are in Mr. F. Rathbone's gallery two white marble mantelpieces made for Longton Hall, one in 1777 and the other two years after. The first of these has as a central ornament, the fine design by Flaxman representing the Apotheosis of Virgil: on either side of this are two decorative plaques forming the frieze; the blocks at either end are heads of Medusa, while the jambs are ornamented with two important plaques representing trophies and altars. The later mantelpiece has a large central circular medallion—a profile head—of Ceres, while the other plaques bear designs of corn and conventional ornament. All these pieces are wrought in solid blue and white jasper of fine quality. The catalogues issued by Wedgwood and Bentley have just been named; they were drawn up by Bentley and revised by his partner. The first appeared in 1773, the second in 1774, the third was a translation into French of the second, the fourth was published in 1777, and the fifth in English and a sixth in French in 1779. Bentley wrote the introduction to the first edition and also the various modifications and numerous additions which appeared in the subsequent issues. One edition only, that of 1787, was published after Bentley's death. It should be added, in order to show the Continental development of the business, that the catalogue was published in Dutch in the year 1778 at Amsterdam, and that in the following year it appeared in a German dress at Leipsic. The wide distribution in Europe of the productions of Etruria at this time may be learnt from the numerous specimens bearing the stamp of Wedgwood and Bentley which have been recognised in many Continental cities by English travellers. The writer, for instance, discovered many of the variegated or "pebble" vases in the Natural History Museum of the Florence University.

Something has already been said as to the founding of the Staffordshire Etruria. The village, if such it can be called, does not now present, it must be owned, a very pleasing aspect, but as its population has been gradually increasing since Wedgwood's day, and now

reaches the respectable total of 5,300, it must be regarded as a flourishing colony. The potworks remain, so far as outward appearance goes, in much the same state as when first erected. This cannot be said of Wedgwood's residence, Etruria Hall. In 1884 after a recent visit of inspection, I wrote of it in the following words: "The house has an air of faded magnificence, in spite of neglect, the dinginess of its surroundings, and the smoke-smitten trees hard by." The destruction of vegetation, which imparts so dreary and forlorn an appearance to the neighbourhood, is due not so much to the smoke of the potworks, but to the noxious gases emitted from the neighbouring bar-iron furnaces of Lord Granville. On penetrating to the cellars of the mansion I had no difficulty in discovering some of the appliances and receptacles, for his secret preparations, used by Josiah Wedgwood. For here rather than in the works he was continually experimenting, in order to effect the improvement of his ceramic pastes, glazes and pigments, away from the too curious eyes of visitors or workmen; and here his secretary and assistant, Alexander Chisholm, was in frequent attendance.

It is impossible, in a condensed account such as that now offered, to describe even a few of the important orders which Wedgwood executed at the Etruria Works for royal, distinguished or wealthy patrons. A word however must be said concerning the celebrated service made for the Empress of Russia, Catherine II. This was shown in the summer of 1774 in the new Greek Street rooms. Mrs. Delany wrote about it, saying, "there are three rooms below and two above filled with it, laid out on tables, everything that can be wanted to serve a dinner; the ground, the common ware pale brimstone, the drawings in purple, the borders a wreath of leaves, the middle of each piece a particular view of all the remarkable places in the King's dominions." The service (or rather the services, for there were two) consisted of 952 pieces. Their cost as plain cream-coloured ware previous to decoration was no more than £51 8*s.* 4*d.* The mere enamel-painting of the views and borders entailed an expenditure of more than £2,200. Some duplicate specimens of plates and cups belonging to this service still remain in England, and though well and elaborately decorated they cannot be said to be wholly satisfactory. This was the fault, not of the potters and painters, but of the conditions imposed by the

Imperial patron. There is an incongruity in the notion of cutting up your slice of mutton on a charming landscape, and helping a mediæval castle to a spoonful of mashed potato! The Empress kept this service at her country retreat of La Grénouillière, where it was seen by Lord Malmesbury in 1779.

When during his later years Wedgwood had become not only very prosperous but had acquired considerable wealth, his generous and public spirit prompted him to employ much of his riches in furthering wise schemes of benevolence and general utility. All through his life, as means and opportunities allowed, generosity was a marked characteristic of the man. In two particulars, however, his conduct seems open to some degree of censure. For he endeavoured to prevent the modellers and artists whom he employed from acquiring any honour from their labours, not permitting them to affix their names to the products of their skill: and he opposed Richard Champion of Bristol in his attempts to secure some slight pecuniary reward for his laborious and skilful trials in the manufacture of true porcelain just at the time when he was on the point of making his admirable productions a commercial success. One would like to think that it was sheer ignorance of the facts rather than prejudice and self-interest which induced Wedgwood to write to Bentley thus in 1777:—"Poor Champion, you may have heard, is quite demolished. It was never likely to be otherwise as he had neither professional knowledge, sufficient capital, nor scarcely any real acquaintance with the materials he was working upon. I suppose we might buy some growan stone and growan clay now upon easy terms for they prepared a large quantity this last year." An able refutation of these statements has been made by Mr. Hugh Owen in his *Two Centuries of Ceramic Art in Bristol* (pp. 149–151). Mr. Owen's account of this unhappy business is too long to quote in its entirety, but there are two passages therein which deserve citation:—"Every step taken by Wedgwood in this dispute needs the labour of an apologist." "His needless fear of competition rendered inoperative, for a time, the better feelings of a noble nature."

This is scarcely the place for a disquisition on what are commonly described as the scientific labours of Wedgwood. He reckoned many

scientific men, such as Darwin and Priestley, amongst his friends, and thoroughly appreciated their endeavours to apply their knowledge to purposes of practical utility. He had an able assistant in Alexander Chisholm, who entered his employ in the year 1781. And we read of his engaging a lecturer on chemistry to give instruction to his sons. He received the distinguished honour of being enrolled in the Royal Society, not however by reason of his chemical qualifications, but on account of his ingenious invention of an instrument for measuring high degrees of temperature. It was on the 16th of January, 1783, that Josiah Wedgwood was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society; he was formally admitted into this Society "for improving natural knowledge" on the 13th of February in the same year. Five papers by him were published in the *Philosophical Transactions*. Three of these, relating to the measurement of high temperatures by means of the shrinkage of clay-cylinders, appeared in the volumes for 1782, 1784, and 1786, and furnish details concerning the use and the indications afforded by the Pyrometer invented by their author. The two remaining papers are on chemical subjects, and are to be found in the *Phil. Trans.*, vols. lxxiii. (1783) and lxxx. (1790). The first of these contributions gives an analysis of Derbyshire Black Wadd, and is interesting to the modern chemist as describing a method of separating iron from manganese by means of fractional precipitation with an alkali, and as mentioning the change of colour due to the passage of the protoxide of the latter metal into the binoxide. But it is impossible to argue from these two chemical papers and from his letters and memoranda that Wedgwood was a great chemist. Doubtless he was a most persistent and indefatigable experimenter, as well as an acute observer. The trial of materials and recipes, gathered from all quarters, with a view to their employment in bodies, glazes and colours, constituted the greatest part of his experimental work. Chemistry, in Wedgwood's day, was a science in a very early stage of development; even had he mastered all that was known of it, the aid that it could have afforded him in his practical inquiries would have been comparatively insignificant. Nevertheless it may be freely conceded that in his knowledge of chemistry and of physics, Wedgwood stood alone amongst the potters of his day. We learn from his papers and memoranda that he was familiar with the few

chemical reagents that were available in his time. He tested the action of these, as well as of different temperatures and admixtures, upon the materials which he was using or was proposing to use in his craft. His studies, however, must necessarily have been confined in great measure to the comparison of phenomena, the real nature of which a whole century devoted to philosophical research has not sufficed entirely to explain.

Wedgwood's literary work was not wholly confined to his correspondence with Bentley, Darwin, and other friends. He wrote and published several pamphlets. His style was somewhat laboured, and his grammar not above reproach, but he succeeded in conveying his meaning, while we always feel sure that he wrote under a strong conviction of the importance of what he was saying. There is sound common sense in the able *Address to the Young Inhabitants of the Pottery*, which he published in 1783 on the occasion of bread-riots. In the same year he also wrote another address to workmen on the subject of entering into the service of foreign manufacturers. His *Memorial relative to a Petition from Mr. Champion for the Extension of a Patent*, and his *Conjectures on the Bas-reliefs of the Portland Vase* were less happy productions.

Wedgwood's health was never robust, and during the last five years gave frequent occasions for anxiety to his friends. He had partially retired in 1790 from some of the more active duties of his business and was able to take longer holidays than before. At home he had many recreations, collecting books, engravings and objects of natural history, and occupying himself in the development of the gardens and grounds of Etruria Hall, where, moreover, he constantly entertained a succession of congenial visitors. But Wedgwood was not long to enjoy his partial retirement from the cares of business. After a brief illness, the nature of which left no hope of recovery, Josiah Wedgwood passed away, towards the end without pain and unconscious, on the 3rd of January, 1795. Had he lived to the late summer of that year he would have been 65. His grave is in the churchyard of Stoke : in the chancel of that church there is a monument to his memory by Flaxman. The inscription thereon tells us that he " converted a rude and inconsiderable Manufactory into an elegant Art and an important part of National Commerce."

Wedgwood left more than half a million of money in addition to his large and flourishing business.

There are five portraits of Josiah Wedgwood. The best of these is by Sir Joshua Reynolds; it was painted in 1783. It has been engraved twice; the version by S. W. Reynolds has been reproduced in Fig. 1. George Stubbs painted two portraits of the master—one, on horseback, is now in the possession of Lord Tweedmouth, the other, of kitcat size, was engraved by G. T. Stubbs, but is an unsympathetic and commonplace work. The fourth portrait is the cameo medallion of which none of the copies in the jasper body is of fine quality. The fifth is the posthumous relief by Flaxman on the monument in Stoke Church. To this list may be added the modern bust by Fontana in the Memorial Institute at Burslem.

CHAPTER XII

HIS POSITION AS AN ART-POTTER

A Pervading Style; Merits and Defects; Sources of his Designs; Artists Employed—James Tassie, John Flaxman; Imitators and Successors

If one has collected together a considerable number of pieces of the different kinds of earthenware which were first made in England between the years 1760 and 1800, it will not prove a difficult task, even for the uninitiated, to separate the specimens into three groups. Of these groups one will present what naturalists call a distinctive "facies." It will show, in respect to material, form, and colour, not only a marked superiority to the other groups, but a pervading style—a style originating in the union of beauty with utility. Ornament is not an after-thought but a growth,—a development rather than an addition. Needless to say that this characteristic style distinguishes the vast majority of Wedgwood's productions. A second group, in our hypothetical collection, will show in a hesitating way, and to a variable degree, many of the merits of the first group; it will contain works by the most competent of the plagiarists and imitators of the great potter. One feels that had it not been for his previous labours these productions would never have seen the light, and that the greater number of them have a second-hand and second-rate air. The third group will be altogether miscellaneous and, for the most part, inferior. With rare and not very important exceptions, the pieces included in this group will represent potteries which were not under the control of an inspiring and original idea.

The case presented in the preceding paragraph may help us in defining Wedgwood's artistic position. He was not a mere employer of artists, not a mere translator into clay of designs made by other

hands in other materials. Nor was he a mere copier of the antique. He possessed a marvellous power of co-ordination and adaptation, and appreciated the grace of congruity, although he occasionally allowed the association of incompatible decorative elements. He was endowed with an inventive faculty which revealed itself not only in new materials and new methods but in the origination of new forms. Moreover, having selected with consummate taste the artistic materials, original and derived, which he deemed to be best suited for his purpose, he so informed them with his spirit and temper that, under wide diversities of substance, colour and shape, there will be found a certain unity of conception. In a word, no other potter of modern times has so successfully welded into one harmonious whole the prose and the poetry of the ceramic art. Wedgwood's appreciation of beauty and his imagination and fancy, on the one hand, with his skill, perseverance and knowledge on the other, enabled him to attain an altogether unique position. True, he may not have left us any artistic works which we can call wholly his own, although we know that he was a practical thrower, an expert modeller, and an ingenious designer of new forms. But we owe an immense debt of gratitude to Wedgwood for the exquisite taste with which he reproduced and multiplied in beautiful materials the creations of great artists such as Flaxman, and for the industrial enterprise which enabled him to make and to distribute throughout the Old and New Worlds countless objects in which utility and beauty were happily combined.

Wedgwood's successes were however not unaccompanied by drawbacks. Mechanical processes were more largely employed by him than by any of his predecessors. Very few even of his most elaborate and most purely ornamental productions were unique. He used the same decorative motives over and over again even in his more costly pieces. And the touch of the human hand, which gives life to designs poor in conception and feeble in execution, was necessarily absent from the vast majority of the cheaper products of his kilns. Occasionally he did not hesitate, instead of preparing new moulds, to rearrange the figures of a classic composition, to omit some of them, or even to add incongruous elements from another source. If he had possessed more knowledge and more appreciation of the meaning of the ancient myths these changes would have been

impossible. And it is to be regretted that Wedgwood expended so much of his extraordinary power and skill in the work of making copies of objects of antique art, although he thereby favoured and followed a prevailing fashion of his day.

Indications have been already given, from time to time in this paper, of the sources, ancient and modern, from which Wedgwood obtained his designs. His earlier productions were mere copies from casts of antique and cinque-cento gems and pastes. Afterwards he borrowed from a great diversity of sources, often modifying the original composition. He had frequent recourse to illustrated books like those of Comte de Caylus, Mr. James Stuart and Sir W. Hamilton. He had drawings and models made from Greek vases and Roman and Græco-Roman bas-reliefs. The portraits of illustrious persons of his own day were taken from pictures, engravings, coins, and medals, or were specially modelled in wax by competent artists such as Flaxman, Hackwood and Tassie. Many other artists, both sculptors or modellers and draughtsmen, contributed designs. Sometimes the drawings of lady amateurs (Lady Diana Beauclerk and Lady Templeton, for instance) were translated into cameo reliefs and became popular. In the hope that further information may be ultimately elicited concerning some of Wedgwood's artists, I have gathered many of their names into an alphabetical list, appended to this chapter, accounts and letters of Wedgwood as given in Miss Meteyard's works having been the chief source of information. Our knowledge of the works produced by the Italian sculptors employed at Rome, either independently or under Flaxman's or Henry Webber's supervision, is imperfect, but in some instances they have been identified, though details of the personal history of these men, Angelini, Dalmazzoni, Pacetti and others, are wholly wanting. Of the many excellent designers and modellers who executed work of a more or less original character in Wedgwood's own factories and exclusively for him we know scarcely anything but the names, and a few of their productions. Occasionally however we learn incidentally some interesting particulars concerning these artists. Thus we find that in 1769 Wedgwood wrote of an accomplished painter of admirable figures and borderings on his Etruscan ware, a Mrs. Wilcox, who had just left the china factory at Worcester. "She is a daughter to that Fry who was famous for doing heads in mezzotint." This was

Thomas Frye, the inventor of Bow China. Thus a casual notice of his daughter affords interesting evidence of an hereditary talent and suggests a link of connection between three famous potworks.

When, however, Wedgwood obtained the occasional aid of independent artists other sources of information are available. Such, for instance, is the case with two modellers to whom the potter was largely indebted, namely James Tassie and John Flaxman. Brief notices of the careers of these two men may therefore be here fitly introduced.

Wedgwood appears at first to have been dependent for his copies of antique and modern gems upon James Tassie. A bill of his is extant dated November 11th, 1769, in which Messrs. Wedgwood and Bentley are charged 11*s.* 8*d.* for seventy impressions in sulphur, and 2*s.* for a couple of impressions in enamel glass. The majority of the cameos and intaglios comprised in Wedgwood's first catalogue, published in 1773, were derived from moulds furnished by Tassie, but in later years Wedgwood employed moulders of his own, by whom an immense number of impressions were made from the original gems in many famous cabinets. Still a few words concerning James Tassie may be of interest, for to this very skilful artist Wedgwood not improbably owed the idea of copying in a plastic material not merely antique gems but the portraits of the men and women of his day.

James Tassie was born at Pollokshaws, near Glasgow, on July 15th, 1735. He commenced his career as a stonemason, but soon turned his attention to the arts of modelling and sculpture, studying in the academy established in Glasgow by Robert and Andrew Foulis. From Glasgow Tassie went in 1763 to Dublin, where in conjunction with Dr. Quin he perfected the vitreous compositions used in copying antique gems. In 1766 Tassie settled in London. In the same year the Society of Arts granted him a premium for his "Profiles in Pastes." He exhibited "Portraits Modelled in Paste" at the Society of British Artists in 1768; in the following year he contributed other portraits to the exhibition of the Royal Academy. The extent of his labours both as an original artist and as a copyist may be gauged by the fact that the catalogue of his reproductions from the antique issued in 1791 contained no less than 15,800 numbered items: to these must be added several hundred portrait medallions, which

are undoubtedly of his own modelling and execution, although he copied in his white vitreous paste many of the works of other sculptors and medallists. Tassie's larger cameo portraits are generally of high quality, and may be ranked with those which Wedgwood produced in his jasper body. Indeed there occur examples of the busts of many distinguished persons both in Tassie enamel and in Wedgwood paste. And it may be safely concluded that the originals of many of these were the work of James Tassie. Mr. John M. Gray, in his biographical sketch of Tassie (Edinburgh, 1893), particularly names the medallions of Joseph Black, chemist, James Byres, architect, the Earl of Mansfield, and Viscount Melville, as reproduced by Wedgwood from the moulds furnished by Tassie. The death of James Tassie took place on the 1st of June, 1799, rather more than four years after that of his better-known contemporary, Josiah Wedgwood. It is to be regretted that his tombstone, in the graveyard attached to a Congregational chapel in Collier's Rents, Southwark, though it existed in a dilapidated condition in the year 1860, has since that date been destroyed.

It is worthy of note that Tassie frequently mounted his portrait reliefs of white enamel on grounds of coloured glass, and that many of his more important cameos show unmistakable signs of having been finished by the gem-engraver on the lapidary's wheel. Moreover, there is still a third particular in which one may possibly recognise a similarity in the processes adopted by Tassie and by Wedgwood. For in Sir John Soane's Museum there are preserved two large plaques, which have been always attributed to the Scotch artist, and which remind one very forcibly of those early trial pieces in which Wedgwood covered the backgrounds of his cameos with coloured enamel, which when fired yielded a rather glossy though uneven surface. I do not however feel certain as to these two plaques owing more to Tassie than their design. Of course there was a radical difference between the moist plastic material employed by the potter and the half-fused vitreous enamel which the artist in glass used in the manufacture of the vast majority of his productions. The pressing of softened glass into a mould demanded the utmost promptitude and precision in manipulation, while a more leisurely treatment was admissible in the case of any kind of ceramic paste.

It was on the recommendation of Bentley that John Flaxman's aid as a designer and modeller was first secured by Wedgwood. The project of making large tablets for chimney-pieces was under discussion between the partners in 1775. On the 14th January in that year, Wedgwood, in replying to a letter from Bentley, says, "I am glad you have met with a modeller, and that Flaxman is so valuable an artist. It is but a few years since he was a most supreme coxcomb, but a little more experience may have cured him of this foible." Wedgwood soon learnt to estimate very highly the genius of the young sculptor, wrote of him as "the greatest artist of the age," and gave him a long series of important commissions. I have already indicated, in preceding chapters, how many of the finest portrait medallions and classical figures and groups can be unhesitatingly assigned to Flaxman, but the sculptor was occupied with many other commissions for the potworks of Etruria during the whole period 1775–1795.

The story of Flaxman's life is so well known that the briefest summary of the chief incidents of its earlier part is all that need be here given. His father was a maker and seller of plaster casts, but was occasionally employed as a modeller by Roubiliac, Scheemakers, and other sculptors of the time. His second son, the subject of this notice, was born on 6th July, 1755. The boy's health was weak, and his time was spent, except for a brief period, at home, and chiefly amongst the casts of his father's shop. We hear, however, of the notice taken of him by some of his father's artistic and literary patrons. He occupied himself in drawing and modelling and in teaching himself classic fables and Latin. When no more than twelve years old he gained the first prize for a medal from the Society of Arts, which awarded him a similar distinction three years later. From 1767 onwards he contributed works to several public exhibitions: in 1770 he exhibited a wax model of Neptune in the Royal Academy, of which he then became a student. In the competition for the gold medal in 1772 the President and Council of the Royal Academy awarded it to a rival. This reverse seems to have exercised a salutary effect upon the youth, checking his tendency to self-assertion. In 1775 he began working for Wedgwood, who

during the last twenty years of his life helped in many ways the young sculptor. When Flaxman was twenty-four he executed the lifelike portrait of himself which is given in Plate IV. from the specimen at South Kensington; for this the authorities of the Museum gave £161 14*s.* just thirty years ago. A replica of this terra-cotta medallion is in the collection of Mr. Propert.

His series of monumental designs was commenced in 1780, and was continued until his death in 1826. Of his larger works these public monuments were the best, but as the marbles were too often completed by Italian workmen, the spirit of Flaxman's original models frequently evaporated under their hands, a certain degree of emptiness and insipidity being the result. In his smaller works, especially in the wax portraits and classical bas-reliefs executed entirely by his own hand for Wedgwood, and in such pieces as the statuette in terra-cotta which is given in Fig. 28 from the original in the South Kensington Museum, the life and power of the sculptor is well seen. By many critics his pen and pencil and washed sketches are considered to be Flaxman's most characteristic and satisfactory work. Their simplicity and grace were caught from antique vase-paintings and bas-reliefs, but these drawings, slight though they generally are, are instinct with personal observation, and possess the charm of tender feeling and happy invention.

In 1782 Flaxman married Ann Denman; five years afterwards, helped by the recommendations and pecuniary aid of Wedgwood, he went to Rome, where he remained until 1794; the rest of his life was spent in London.

Wedgwood's successes provoked the rivalry of his brother potters, but not content with improving their own productions, they deliberately copied his. For instance, they did not have direct recourse to the antique examples whence Wedgwood derived so many of his designs, but they secured early copies of his pieces and proceeded to imitate them, form, body, ornament and áll. Cameos, seals, vases, and the "useful" ware—all were pirated. None of his plagiarists achieved a success at once so varied and so complete as that of Wedgwood. Perhaps John Turner, who worked in Lane End from 1762 until his death in 1786, may be regarded as having nearly equalled Wedgwood in the quality of his blue and white jasper. It is, however, distinguish-

Walter L. Gells Phs

John Flaxman
from a Medallion in Terra cotta by himself.

able by its texture, which is more porcellanous, and by its colour, which has either a greenish or a purplish hue. William Adams, of Burslem, and afterwards of Tunstall, produced blue and white jasper of good

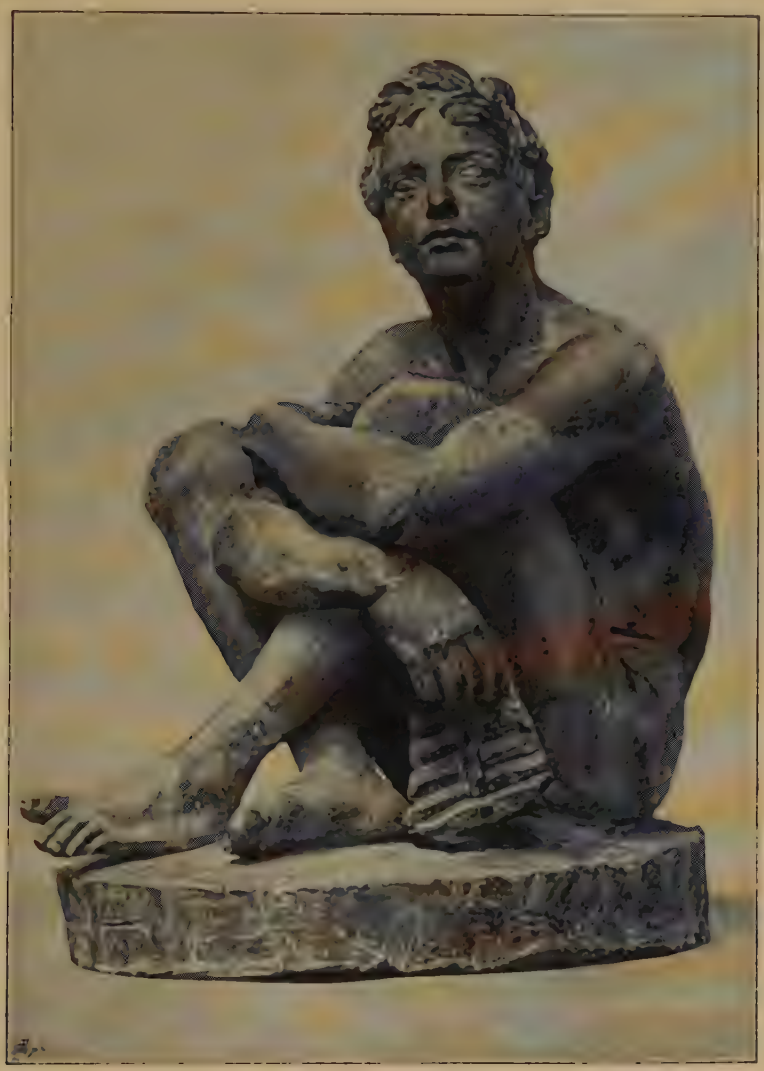

Fig. 28.—*Statuette, seated figure, in right hand a syrinx; terra-cotta.*

quality; much work in the same material is also due to the successors of Adams. The blue and white cameos made at Sèvres in imitation of Wedgwood's jasper are often good, but they are of biscuit porcelain.

Palmer, of Hanley, was an unscrupulous imitator of Wedgwood's seals and vases, and occasionally forged the mark "Wedgwood and Bentley." He and a potter of the name of Neale also imitated the encaustic-painted vases of Wedgwood. Elijah Mayer, of Hanley, produced many good pieces in the style of Wedgwood and in various bodies. A dozen other Staffordshire potters, belonging to the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, might be named as having worked under the direct influence of the inventions and improvements introduced by Josiah Wedgwood.

LIST OF THE CHIEF MODERN ARTISTS WHOSE DESIGNS OR MODELS WERE USED BY WEDGWOOD.

(Dates in brackets refer to years in which the several artists are known to have been working for Wedgwood.)

Angelini (Rome, 1787).
Astle, Thomas; 1735-1803.
Bacon, John; 1740-1799.
Barret, George; 1732-1784.
Beauclerk, Lady Diana; 1734-1808.
Burch, Edward; (1772).
Coward, John (1768).
Dalmazzoni, Angelo (Rome, 1787-1795).
Dassier, John; 1676-1763.
Davaere or Devere, John (Rome, 1788-1794).
Flaxman, John; 1755-1826.
Fratoddi (Rome, 1787).
Gosset, Isaac; 1713-1799.
Gosset, Matthew; 1683-1744.
Grant, B., and Hoskins, James (1774).
Greatbach, William.
Hackwood, William (1770).
Landre, Mrs. (1769, 1774).
Le Brun, C.; 1619-1690.
Lochée, John Charles; (1787).
Mangiarotti (Rome, 1787).
Manzolini (Rome, 1787).
Nini, Jean Baptiste; 1716-1786.
Pacetti (Rome, 1787).
Parker, Theodore (1769).
Pingo, T. (1769).
Reynolds, Sir Joshua; 1723-1792.
Roubiliac, L. F.; 1695-1762.
Stothard, Thomas; 1755-1834.
Stubbs, George; 1724-1806.
Tassie, James; 1735-1799.
Tebo (1775).
Templeton, Lady (1783).
Smith, Joachim (1773-1775).
Steel, Aaron (1784).
Webber, Henry (Etruria, 1782).
Wilcox, Mrs. (1769-1776).

Amongst other names of painters, designers, and modellers which might have been included in the above list are those of Boot, Miss Crewe, Denby, Holinshed, Keeling, Richard Parker, P. Stephan, Ralph Unwin, and Edward Watson. In a considerable number of cases, extant productions of Wedgwood's factory can be definitely assigned to many of the artists whose names are here recorded.

CHAPTER XIII

COLLECTIONS AND COLLECTORS

Provincial Museums; Public Collections in London; Formation and Dispersal of Private Collections; Criteria of Quality and Date; Marks

However small a collection of English pottery may be it generally includes a few examples of Wedgwood's productions. But it will be easily understood that a few examples cannot suffice to adequately represent the amazing variety of work which was turned out from the kilns of the great potter. Very few collections, public or private, have been formed in pursuance of a definite plan;—indeed, at the present day it would not be possible to obtain by purchase anything like a complete representative series of Josiah Wedgwood's productions. There are several distinct types, as to form, though not of material, which are now known only from his catalogues or his manuscript papers. And then, too, of his largest and most important plaques and vases very few examples exist, so that years may elapse without one of these rare pieces coming into the market. Josiah Wedgwood himself found, when too late, that it was impossible to make up a complete set of his own works.

None of our national museums possesses a really representative collection of the works of Wedgwood. Several provincial towns however are richer in this respect than London. Liverpool with the Mayer collection, and Birmingham with the interesting series of specimens gathered and presented by Messrs. R. and G. Tangye are far ahead of the metropolis. Fortunately Burslem itself, as the central town of the Staffordshire potteries, contains the Wedgwood Memorial Institute, in which is preserved a really fine assemblage of the productions of the great potter. This collection is due to the munificence of Mr. Thomas

Hulme, who has formed it by means of judicious selections from all the recent sales of examples of the old period of the Etruria manufactory. Other specimens will be found in the two pottery towns of Stoke and Hanley; although in the Mechanics' Institute of Hanley and the Free Public Library of Stoke the productions of the predecessors and contemporaries of Wedgwood are far more fully represented than are those of the master. The Castle Museum at Nottingham has been recently enriched with the fine collection of the late Mr. Felix Joseph; some specimens will be found in the Art Museums of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and in the Science and Art Museum at Dublin.

The three metropolitan public collections of Wedgwood are those in the British Museum, the South Kensington Museum, and the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street. Even were they combined into a single assemblage they would afford a very imperfect notion of the extensive range of our potter's labours. One would miss examples, or at least an adequate representation, of entire groups of Wedgwood's productions, such as of large plaques in black basalt, in white semi-porcelain, in coloured jasper and in encaustic painted ware, of statuettes, busts and animals; of lamps and candelabra; of flower- and root-pots; of cream-coloured services for table use; and of ink-vessels, paint-chests, eye-cups and other objects of domestic and technical utility. I do not think that too much emphasis can be laid upon the happy manner in which Wedgwood associated beauty with serviceableness in his different varieties of useful ware; this characteristic feature cannot be properly shown by a miscellaneous gathering consisting of a pair of plates from one service, a dish from another, and a soup-tureen from a third. One wants in a museum a table equipage, not complete indeed, but representative. So, also, one would like to see in a public gallery illustrations of the way in which Wedgwood adapted his productions to the arts of the jeweller and the architect. His bas-reliefs in various bodies let into panelled walls, his suites of tablets for the friezes and jambs of mantelpieces, his large vases and busts for the tops of book-cases, and his wine coolers for the sideboard, cannot be duly appreciated when dissociated from their intended surroundings and ranged in crowded ranks on the shelves of a cabinet. Nor can the artistic effect of Wedgwood's small and delicate jasper cameos be properly seen when these

choice gems are fixed in formal rows upon a museum tablet, instead of being framed in cut steel, in gold, in silver or in ivory, or set in bonbonnières, tea-caddies and patch-boxes. Our national collections are therefore not inadequate merely on the score of incompleteness, but also by reason of their defective arrangement.

During the last forty years or so many private collections of Wedgwood's productions have been made; many also have been dispersed. Specimens of the jasper-body have been more generally sought for than those made of other and perhaps less choice compositions. Coloured jasper vases and *déjeuner* sets as well as cameo medallions and portraits have mainly engaged the attention of collectors. Black basalt, white semi-porcelain and white jasper, as well as granite and marbled ware, have not secured a high place in the esteem of the majority of connoisseurs. A few collectors have gathered together specimens of table services in Queen's ware: the delicately tinted dessert dishes, plates, tureens, compotiers, and bowls, in the form of different species of shells, have been more highly appreciated than the pieces with enamelled ornamental borders of more or less conventional design painted by hand. The cream-ware decorated with transfer-printed engravings in black, red, or puce, has perhaps been deemed to be a less characteristic product of Etruria, since we know that for the most part it was printed and fired in the kilns of Messrs. Sadler and Green at Liverpool. But on more careful inquiry it will be found that Wedgwood did not rest content with the designs purchased from others or made by Sadler and Green, but was continually furnishing the Liverpool firm with fresh material obtained by himself and more agreeable to his own taste. He frequently suggested improvements in style, method, or colour. As to this last point, that of the harmonious colouring of his cream-ware, Wedgwood wrote to Green in 1770 (in reference to designs printed in outline and then filled in with enamels by hand), urging him to avoid certain crude colours and to adopt a more sober scale. So that after all no collection of Wedgwood's cream ware can be considered representative unless it contain a series of specimens illustrating the salutary influence which the great potter exercised upon the practice of the art of transfer-printing on earthenware by Sadler and Green.

The frequent formation and frequent dispersal of private collections of the works of Wedgwood during the last five-and-twenty years has had several different results. Many specimens have found a final, and we hope secure, resting-place in public museums; many have passed from one private collection to another, then to a third, and perhaps even to a fourth; not a few have been lost sight of, at least for a time. Another consequence of such changes of ownership, and of the attention paid to the subject, has been seen in the searches which have been made for fine examples in every part of Europe. Not only the shops but the private dwellings of France, Germany, Italy, Holland and Belgium have been ransacked by enthusiastic collectors and eager dealers. One hears of a series of large white and lilac jasper plaques being discovered in a little back parlour in Venice; of a fine cameo of the Medusa's head being bought for five lire in a broker's shop in a village near Turin; of beautiful medallions set as ornaments in furniture, in clocks and even in doors in a remote French château, while some very choice specimens of the best period of manufacture have returned to the country that produced them, even from Russia. Wedgwood had agencies in several important Continental centres, and the distribution of his ornamental as well as of his useful wares during the last quarter of the eighteenth century was carried out on an extensive scale.

During the last twenty or thirty years not only have a large number of fine specimens of Wedgwood's work formed part of several collections of works of art and of domestic furniture which have been dispersed by auction, but there have been sold many inclusive and general gatherings of pottery as well as of Wedgwood's productions in particular. The prices obtained on such occasions have fluctuated considerably, but have as a rule been greatly in advance of those of forty years ago. When several such sales occur about the same time or at a period of commercial depression, the prices realised are naturally lowered, especially if it so happen that the Wedgwood collectors of the day are content with what they already possess and no new gatherings are being formed. The priced catalogues of recent auctions are, for these reasons alone, insufficient guides whereby to judge of the appreciation of the examples sold.

Moreover, a catalogue affords no adequate indications of quality, for all old Wedgwood is not necessarily fine. The chief collections dispersed at Christie's during the last thirty years were these:—De La Rue, 1866; Marryatt, 1867; Barlow, 1869; Carruthers, 1870; Bohn, 1875; Sibson, 1877; Shadford-Walker, 1885; Braxton-Hicks, 1887; and Cornelius Cox, 1890.

At the present time there are many possessors and collectors of old Wedgwood. Some of them are the owners of hereditary or family collections, but the majority have formed their own gatherings by recent purchases. To the former group Sir J. D. Hooker and Professor T. Roger Smith belong; to the latter Mr. J. A. Bartlett, Mr. A. W. Franks, Mr. J. L. Propert, Mr. W. J. Stuart, Lord Tweedmouth, Mr. Jeffery Whitehead and Dr. Edgar Willett. The name of the chief expert in old Wedgwood should be introduced here. Mr. Frederick Rathbone, of South Kensington, has done more in the way of forming the best collections made during recent years than any one else, and a visit to his gallery in Alfred Place West is indeed a treat to the lover of the ceramic art. For thirty-five years he has enjoyed exceptional facilities for the acquisition of an intimate knowledge of the work of the great potter; his good taste and critical eye have enabled him to take full advantage of his opportunities. Having been for some time the agent and representative in the art department of the firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, his acquaintance with the modern period of manufacture has afforded him the means of comparing and contrasting the new work with the old. His knowledge of marks and of the other criteria by which the good pieces may be recognised has been freely given to connoisseurs, and I am myself indebted to him for the cuts of the signatures with which the present chapter concludes. He is at present engaged in the production of a richly illustrated work on Old Wedgwood which is being published by Mr. Quaritch.

It is not possible to define precisely in words those special characteristics by which old and fine Wedgwood may be discriminated from new or inferior. The senses of touch and sight must be brought into requisition. Whatever the variety of material, shape, or decoration may be, there will be apparent a pervading air of lightness with truth of form and perfect finish. In the case of the jasper-body, flatness and

smoothness of ground, without ripples, bubbles or stringiness, are marked features.

The mark on the productions of Wedgwood consisted simply of the name impressed in the clay in letters of varying size; but during the partnership (1769–1780) with Bentley the form adopted on the ornamental ware was "Wedgwood & Bentley," with the addition of "Etruria" on the basalt, Etruscan, and variegated or pebble vases, and occasionally on the pedestals of large busts or figures. On the very small basalt intaglios the initials only, "W. & B.", appear. During the best period of manufacture the impressed marks are sharply defined; occasionally genuine old pieces have no stamp. Besides the manufacturer's mark, an immense number of supplementary signs, sometimes impressed, sometimes painted, have been noted; Miss Meteyard devotes fourteen pages of her *Handbook* to their description; they are workmen's marks, and have little significance; in a few instances, however, they serve to distinguish invariably fine work in the jasper-body. Such is the case with the letter O and the numeral 3, which occur, singly or in association, below the usual Wedgwood stamp.

The following marks are selected from Mr. F. Rathbone's essay on the subject: they, or some of them, occur on pieces made up to the time of Wedgwood's death, but the stamp WEDGWOOD in capital letters has been continuously used at Etruria from 1795 until the present day.

Wedgwood — This rare mark is found on an early piece supposed to have been made by Wedgwood at Burslem.

WEDGWOOD
WEDGWOOD
Wedgwood
Wedgwood — These marks are believed to have been used by Wedgwood previous to his partnership with Bentley, and afterwards on "useful" ware.

This mark occurs on a wafer or bat of clay affixed inside the plinths of old basalt vases or the pedestals of busts.

This circular stamp occurs round the screw at the base of the basalt, granite, and Etruscan vases—never on those of jasper.

WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY

WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY

Wedgwood & Bentley

Wedgwood & Bentley

These marks, varying in size, are found upon busts, granite and basalt vases, figures, plaques, medallions, and cameos, also occasionally (and by accident) upon useful ware of the period.

Wedwood & Bentley 356

This mark occurs on intaglios and is generally accompanied by the Catalogue number.

This rare mark is found only upon chocolate and white seal intaglios, usually portraits, made of two layers of clay and having the edges polished for mounting.

Wedgwood
Wedgwood
Wedgwood
WEDGWOOD
WEDGWOOD
WEDGWOOD

These marks were employed chiefly, if not exclusively, in the period after Bentley's death, while the last three were continued after Wedgwood's death.

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